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SIR F. MAURICE

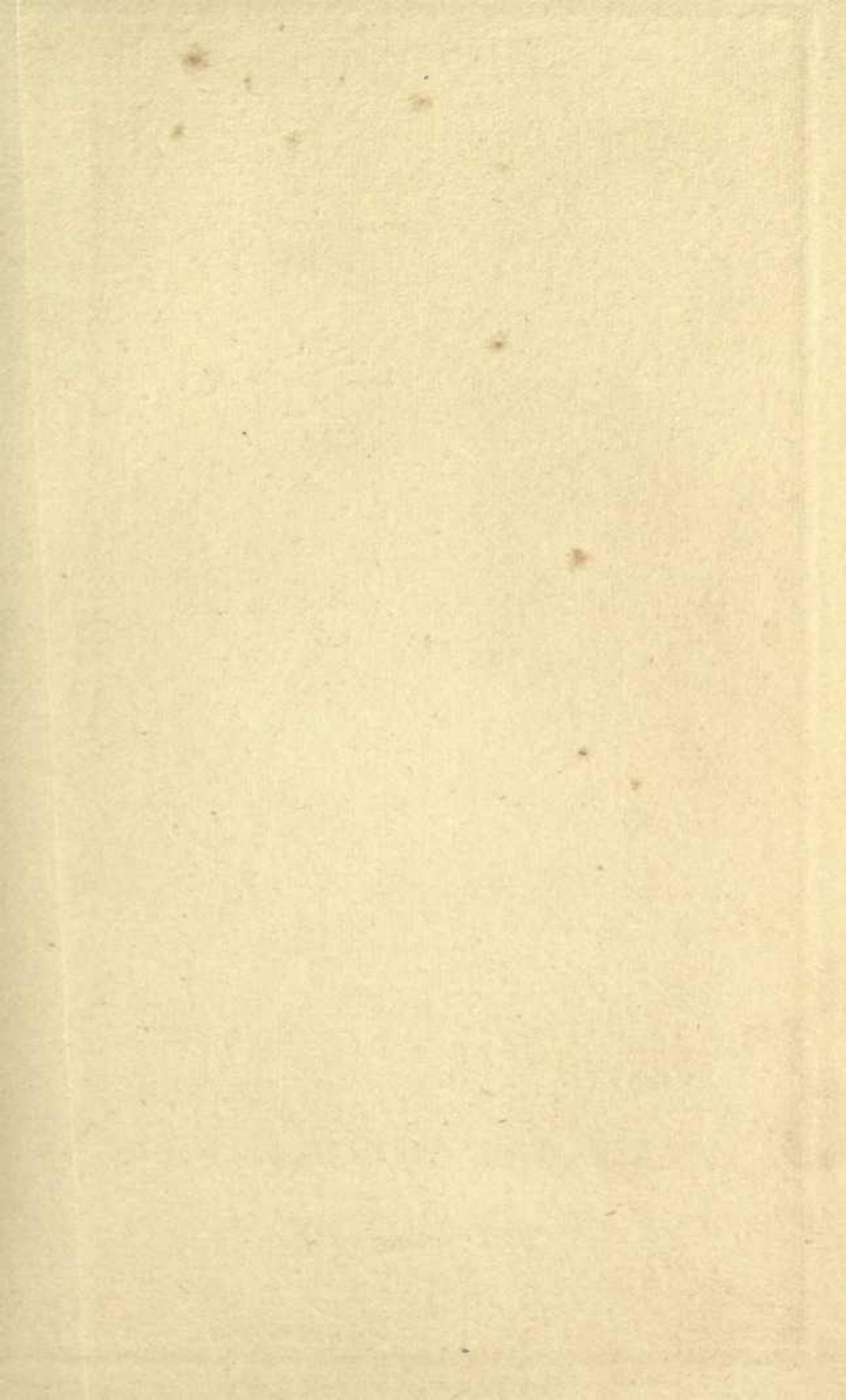
A RECORD

AND

ESSAYS









*Sir Frederick Maurice.*

# SIR FREDERICK MAURICE

A RECORD OF HIS WORK AND  
OPINIONS

WITH EIGHT ESSAYS ON  
DISCIPLINE AND NATIONAL EFFICIENCY

EDITED BY HIS SON  
LIEUT.-COLONEL F. MAURICE

WITH PORTRAIT

LONDON  
EDWARD ARNOLD  
1913

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## PREFACE

DURING the years 1906 and 1907 my father, Sir F. Maurice, began to collect and edit a number of essays and addresses which he had written at various times. This work was stopped by the illness which ended his life. From these papers I have selected those which appear in the second part of this book to accompany a record of his work, because the majority of them contain some biographical touches, and they all of them seem to me to illustrate his views and opinions better than his historical essays, of which he had prepared a considerable number.

My father had, during his lifetime, made arrangements for the publication of most of these essays, and I have to express, in his name, my thanks to the proprietors of the *Fortnightly Review*, the *Contemporary Review*, the *Cornhill Magazine*; to Miss E. H. Pitcairn, the editor, and to Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co., the publishers, of 'Unwritten Laws and Ideals'—in which some of them originally appeared—for permission to make use of them.

The first part of this book is a record of my father's work and opinions, told largely in his own words. It is in no sense a complete memoir, still less a biography.

F. MAURICE.

CAMBERLEY, 1913.





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PART I

JOHN FREDERICK MAURICE

SOLDIER AND THINKER

A RECORD OF HIS WORK AND OPINIONS





## PART I

# JOHN FREDERICK MAURICE

### I

Early Life—The Army in the Sixties—The Wellington  
Prize Essay.

JOHN FREDERICK MAURICE was born on May 24, 1841. He was the elder son of Frederick Denison Maurice, at the time chaplain of Guy's Hospital. His mother was a daughter of Major-General Barton, who had commanded the 2nd Life Guards for a number of years. A sister of Mrs. Maurice had married John Sterling, whose friendship with F. D. Maurice brought the latter and his wife together. Two of Mrs. Maurice's brothers served in the army with some distinction, one seeing service in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, the other, who married a sister of Sir Henry Lawrence, fighting under Lord Gough at Chilianwallah and Goojerat, and subsequently taking an honourable part in the Indian Mutiny.

Mrs. Maurice died when her elder son was four years old, and he and his younger brother came under the care of one of his father's sisters, who joined the family in London. It was, however, another aunt, the wife of Archdeacon Julius Hare, a woman of remarkable ability and character, who, next to his father, most influenced Frederick Maurice in his early years. Not long after his wife's death, F. D. Maurice was appointed Preacher at Lincoln's Inn and Professor of Theology at King's College. He thereupon gave up the chaplaincy at Guy's, and moved to Queen's Square, where

the greater part of my father's boyhood was spent. The years which followed these appointments were those in which F. D. Maurice's teaching and influence first began to be widely known and felt. It was then that he gathered round him the band of workers who, stirred by the events of 1848, eagerly by voice and example spread abroad his principles of social reform. Of this band, the most intimate and devoted were Charles Kingsley, Tom Hughes (author of 'Tom Brown's Schooldays'), J. M. Ludlow, Sir Edward Strachey, and Llewellyn Davies; while amongst the frequent visitors to Queen's Square were Trench, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin; Stanley, afterwards Dean of Westminster; Baron Bünsen; Tennyson; Daniel Macmillan, one of the founders of the great firm of publishers; Thomas Erskine of Linlathen; and, of course, Julius Hare, whose sister F. D. Maurice married as his second wife in 1849.

These years saw the foundation of Queen's College and the Working Men's College, and some of the fiercest controversies that raged round my grandfather, more especially those following his expulsion from King's College and his repudiation of Dean Mansel's doctrine of revelation.

F. D. Maurice's views on education are well known, and are still followed in those educational establishments which he inaugurated. He had an abhorrence of early specialisation, and regarded it as a prostitution of education to limit the acquirement of knowledge to what was necessary to pass examinations. The following extract from a letter of his to Charles Kingsley explains his ideas :

'One subject is much on my mind, which I should have tried to speak of if I had been with you; perhaps you will introduce it or tempt some other person to do so. I do not know any man who has seriously thought of our present examination system who does not feel that it is undermining the physical, intellectual, and moral life of young men, and that it may do this with even more terrible effect for girls, if they are admitted, as of course they should be, to all the



privileges of the other sex. You must be aware of all the degrading talk about what will pay in an examination, which is heard at the Universities. You must know well that noble intellects, which crave for a free culture, are dwarfed by the notion that what they have read and thought is not to be tested and ascertained by the questions of wiser men, but that they are to read and think simply with a view to these questions. You know how parents and physicians alike groan over the loss of physical energy and the shattering of the nerves which they see in young men who have either succeeded or failed in their trials. And what is the reward? A writer in the *Cambridge University Gazette*, who possesses considerable experience, declared the other day that he could not get men to take any interest in Shakespeare unless there was a competitive examination in him, with a Tripos list. It is to this state of things that we are coming.'

It does not appear that it occurred to F. D. Maurice at any time to put his elder son into the army, but it is certain that, even if it had, he would not have changed the system which he pursued in the direction of special preparation for military examinations. He never sent the boy to a public school, for what reason is not known; it was certainly not because he had any objection to public schools, as the younger son went in due course to Winchester. Thus it came about that Frederick Maurice was educated to a great extent at home, with results which affected him deeply throughout his life. Thrown much with his father and his father's associates, he absorbed very fully their principles and ideals; and though his life was to be spent in spheres of activity very different from theirs, his natural versatility enabled him to apply these principles readily to other conditions. Those which were to be his chief guides through life were an intense hatred of oppression and injustice in any form, a readiness to sacrifice all personal interests for a cause which he believed to be right,

and a firm belief in the value of a free expression of opinion in dealing with any problem. 'All opinions—yea, even errors—known, read, and collated, are of main service toward the attainment of what is truest,'\* was a quotation which was often on his lips.

Much of his father's work was done with the pen, and almost every member of the circle in Queen's Square had gained literary distinction in one way or another; it was natural, therefore, that the son should acquire early in life the habit of expressing himself clearly and forcibly on paper. All who heard F. D. Maurice read are of the opinion that his voice was one of the most beautiful and his intonation one of the most perfect to which they ever listened. Reading aloud was a regular family institution, and by this means the boys were introduced to the English classics under conditions which soon formed a taste for the best in literature.

Frederick Maurice became a voracious reader, and cultivated a naturally good memory by learning much poetry by heart. His friends in after-years, who knew how his time, after he joined the army, had been given to professional study, were often astonished at the intimate acquaintance with English literature which he displayed. The greater part of this reading was done as a youth, and formed an important part of his mental training. He was intended by his father to go to Cambridge, and his education was directed mainly to that end. He appears, however, to have inherited a taste for a military career from his mother's side, and, as it was during the period of the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny that he first began to turn his thoughts seriously to his future, it is not surprising that he decided for himself to become a soldier. Seeing one day an advertisement of the entrance examination to Addiscombe, where the artillery cadets of the Indian army were then trained, he asked his father's permission to compete, and passed in second. While he was at Addiscombe that institution was

\* Milton, 'Areopagitica.'

abolished, on the reorganization of the Indian army which followed the Mutiny. He was transferred to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, from which in 1862 he received a commission in the Royal Artillery. He received orders to embark for India, but these were changed, and he joined at Woolwich.

Though the father had exercised no influence in the son's choice of a career, he welcomed the decision when it was reached. The following letter was written by him to Frederick Maurice when the young soldier was expected to go to India :

‘ August, 1862.

‘ When I speak to many men among the clergy, as well as among the laity, of their *calling*, I do not find that they attach much force to the word. They have entered a certain *profession*, which on the whole they prefer to any other, or at least to which they are bound, since they entered upon it ; that is all. . . .

‘ The clergy, you know, are obliged to say that they believe they are called by the Holy Ghost to the office of the ministry. Many object to that language. They wish it blotted out of our service. They think it marks out the clergyman as different from other men. They think it leads him to falsehood. The blessing of it to me has been very great. I have learned from it wherein the clergyman is different from other men, wherein he is like all men. He is different from other men in that he has tasks to perform which other men have not to perform. He is like other men inasmuch as they have all a general calling as men, and have all their specific callings as lawyers, physicians, soldiers, tradesmen. The clergyman who attaches any importance to the baptism which he shares with all men cannot suppose that his general calling is higher than theirs. He cannot suppose that there can be any state greater and more glorious than that of being a member of Christ, the child of God, an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.



‘ If he supposes his specific calling to be higher than theirs, it can only be on this plea : that he is appointed to tell all men *what* they are, *who* calls them to their works, what strength they have for fulfilling their works. He is only entitled to the epithet “ divine ” so far as he believes in his heart and can declare with his lips to all his fellows that their position is fixed for them by God, and that they will have His help day by day in understanding it and maintaining it.

‘ Therefore I prize the words of our Ordination Service. I may have entered very imperfectly into them when I used them first, though I did not use them dishonestly. But every year has made it clearer to me that I have no right and no power to speak a word if the Spirit of God is not really with me, and that I was to say so once and am to say so still, that other men who need His presence as much as I do may be confident that He is also with them, and may ask for His guidance continually. I know how many there are who would tell me that I might apply this language to any occupation more properly than to yours. They will say that your calling cannot be a godly one, that I am profaning what is holy when I am daring to talk of a spirit of love and peace as dwelling with the soldier and prompting his deeds. I have considered the arguments of those who speak thus—I was brought up to regard them as almost self-evident ; I have deliberately rejected them.

‘ The Bible has convinced me, history has convinced me, personal experience has convinced me, that they are not true. I find the expression “ Lord of Hosts ” everywhere in the Scriptures, and accept it as a right and honest expression of a great truth. I find that the leaders of armies and that armies themselves have done nobly works which I recognize as God’s works. I find a spirit of order and obedience in them which I scarcely find elsewhere, and which I wish civilians could imitate. I find justice, gentleness, tenderness, not merely mixing with such qualities in military men, but eminently characteristic of some among

them. This being the case, I have solemnly and with my whole heart and soul refused to make an exception from the maxim which I think governs all offices and undertakings in the case of the office and undertaking of the soldier.

' I recognize him in battles and in the preparation for battles as the servant of the living God. I believe the Spirit of God really calls him to his duties, and fits him for them, as He calls me to mine. And having this faith—without which it would be anguish to think of you in India or anywhere—I feel more bound to insist upon this principle when I discourse about soldiers than in almost any other case.

' For I see how terrible have been, how far more terrible must be, the effects of a loss of this faith in the minds of armies generally, and of the individuals who compose them. The sense of power which armies give is something so tremendous—the illustrations of it in the history of the Roman armies, which had prevailed through discipline and obedience, when they began to think they could govern the State and make Emperors—are so palpable that every true citizen must ask himself: "Who will guard our guardians? Who will keep them from being our destroyers?" The question is serious at all times; it was never so serious as now, when the faith in mere constitutional arrangements is growing faint, when so many are crying out for that organization of forces which they say is only attained under a military despot. If, while this temper is appearing among civilians, the soldier parts with the feeling, which has never been extinct in the Englishman, though at times desperately weak, of a vocation, if he accepts the statement of pious men that he is only a devil's instrument, the prospect for this land and for all lands is darker than one dares to contemplate. But a mere vague impression of there being something good, gentleman-like, patriotic, in your profession will not avail to counteract this temptation, which will become greater every day, which many of the circumstances of such a country as India are likely to foster. Nothing, I believe, short of a firm conviction, growing with the experi-

ence of personal weakness, that you have a calling ; that it cannot be fulfilled unless you are just, manly, gentle, in all your doings to all the people with whom you converse ; and that there is a Divine Overseer of your thoughts and purposes who is inspiring you with justice, manliness, gentleness, who is fighting in you against what is false, inhuman, ungracious ; and that your Guide, Teacher, Restrainer, is the Guide, Teacher, and Restrainer, whether they heed Him or not, of all your superiors, equals, dependents, of your own countrymen and of the natives—nothing but this will stand you in stead when savage impulses get hold of you, and there are motives which seem to justify them, and the public opinion of your class is in favour of them, and you have the power of indulging them.’

As the result of Frederick Maurice’s somewhat late decision to become a soldier, and of the slowness of promotion at the time he entered the army (he remained a subaltern for thirteen and a half years), his prospects in a profession in which retirement at certain ages for the various ranks is the rule may have been to some extent prejudiced. On the other hand, the delay enabled him to complete an education which left him unusually well equipped for the special rôle in which he was later to gain distinction.

Of the condition of the army at home at the time when he received his first commission he wrote in later life :

‘ The long-service system had completely broken down. The battalions were little more than shadows of their paper strength ; cavalry regiments could at best produce a strong squadron. The regimental officers as a body were not allowed to train the few men they commanded nominally. They gave the requisite words of command on parade, but the instruction of the privates was relegated to a large extent to the adjutants and sergeant-majors. The distribution of the army in peace had no connection with the organization for war. If even a small expedition was contemplated, the units to compose it were first brought to-



gether when the force required to take the field was formed. Field manœuvres and training for war under conditions suited to the times did not exist. The work of the majority of officers was limited to a dull routine of garrison duties, from which they took the earliest opportunity to escape. The inducements to professional study were so limited as to be almost non-existent. The majority of the seniors not only did not insist on it—they positively discouraged it. Now the whole instinct of the mass of soldiers is against reading of any kind. As a rule it is the love of out-of-door life, a fancy for the work of dealing with men rather than with books, that leads the young to enter the army as the profession of their choice. Who would wish it to be otherwise? It is only slowly that some of them come to discover that the greatest soldiers, the most practical men, have preached to their followers the absolute necessity, if they would succeed in their profession, or even be able to do their duty in it, of gaining a wider knowledge of the experiences of war than they can obtain without the study of books. How can they know what a Napoleon or a Sir Charles Napier, let us say, has written on that subject if they are encouraged in the belief that it is useless to read anything that Napoleon or Sir Charles Napier has penned? They do not know that it is precisely those who have set most squadrons in array for victory who would tell them that there are very practical experiences of which they would know nothing unless they gained them through the medium of books.

‘In these circumstances the majority of the eager and industrious either specialized in one or other of the technical branches, or took service abroad. There was a small leaven of younger men, such as Wolseley, Evelyn Wood, Hamley, and Brackenbury, who, having fought in the Crimea or the Mutiny, or in both, had learned the real meaning of war, and were studying seriously how to prepare for it. But they, and those whom they gathered round them, had a long struggle ere they could make their voices heard either

in the army or in the country. One Commission after another had tried to tinker up the long-service system ; each had reported the entire failure of all previous attempts. The times were revolutionary, but the army was essentially and intensely conservative ; all armies are so by the very condition of their existence. The generation of habit which it is the great function of military training to bring about tends to beget permanence of tradition and conservatism of ideas. The conservatism of the Continental armies had been broken up in each case by storm and disaster. Prussia owed the germs of her military system to her defeat at Jena, and the crushing of the relics of the great Frederick under the heel of Napoleon. She owed her new development to the ignominious collapse of the system of Scharnhorst and Gneisenau in 1849, when at Olmütz she found herself obliged to cringe before Austria, and in 1859 when she was unable to move to the help of Austria, though the success of Napoleon III. in Italy threatened the invasion of Germany. Fortunately for her, the extent of her failure at that time was unknown to the French Emperor, and he was glad enough to conclude a victorious peace which yet did not leave Italy, as he had promised, free from the Alps to the Adriatic. These comparatively mild lessons had been sufficient to prepare an army at whose War Office there were no divided counsels, for the changes which led up to Königgratz and Sedan. The collapse of Austria in 1866 had made her the humble disciple of her conqueror. Sedan had annihilated the old French army as completely as Jena had swept away the ancient Prussian.

‘ Britain had undergone no corresponding disaster. The horrors of the Crimean winter had been partly glossed over by brilliant victories, and had left her at the end of the war more ready for its continuance than any of the other three Powers engaged. The frightful incidents of the Indian Mutiny, the heroic conduct of our troops, the victorious advance upon Peking, had buried the remembrance of the administrative failures of 1854. After the Chinese expedi-

tion, the nation was in the condition of Belinda, hoping that no such hell as war was ever likely to give trouble again.'

My father used to tell the following story as showing the conservative atmosphere of one of the first messes of which he became a member: The hero of it was a senior officer, who, as a Waterloo veteran, was regarded as the oracle of the anteroom. When any reform or improvement was being discussed, this authority was fond of saying: 'When I was'—*i.e.*, as a last-joined subaltern—'at the Battle of Waterloo, Sir Alexander Dickson rode up to me. Says he to me: "Mr. Smith, do you know that you are wasting your ammunition?" And I to him: "I do, Sir Alexander Dickson." With that Sir Alexander Dickson rode away, and we won the Battle of Waterloo. Any change of the most trifling description is to be deprecated.'

The speaker's assumptions were that, as he had received orders to open fire in certain circumstances, and none to cease firing when the circumstances changed, he was perfectly right to continue doing what he knew to be harmful, and that this spirit won the Battle of Waterloo. When, as in this case, war experience was used to bolster up an unsound conclusion, my father was wont to refer to Frederick the Great's well-known story of the mule, which after following Eugene through his campaigns remained a mule.

Into this atmosphere Frederick Maurice brought a mind trained under his father to seek out the reasons for the established order of things, and to regard it as having no prescriptive right to continue unless it justified its existence. After a period of duty at Woolwich, he served for some time at Shorncliffe, and was then ordered to Scotland, being stationed at Leith, near Edinburgh.

He took at once to the study of military history, more especially the history of the Napoleonic wars, and was engaged more or less regularly in literary work, chiefly for the *Spectator* and the *Friend of India*, for which he became Parliamentary reporter. From Scotland he was sent to



Ireland, where he met the lady whom in 1869 he married. Previous to his marriage he had entered the Staff College, and on passing out was appointed in 1872 Instructor in Tactics at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. While there he obtained his first chance of distinction, in circumstances which he has himself described :

‘ I happened at the time to have among my immediate and most intimate friends several very able English officers who were closely acquainted with the armies of the Continent. One had served in the Prussian army in 1866, one in the Austrian in the same campaign, others had been present with both armies during the Franco-German War. The duty on which I was then engaged enabled me to devote all my time to studying the experiences of the war as they were described by those who had taken part in it. I was through my friends informed of everything that was then pouring from the Press of Germany with a profusion very analogous to that which we have experienced in England in regard to the present war,\* but with this difference, that most of the writers were men who had all their lives been engaged in professional study before they began to record what they had seen. The only difficulty lay in assimilating the mass of material, and in discounting the particular prejudices which might be imparted into his evidence by the position of the writer.

‘ I was engaged in this study when the Duke of Cambridge, the Commander-in-Chief of the army, approved of a proposal submitted to him by the second Duke of Wellington—that, in order to ascertain the impression which had been made upon the officers of the army by the events of the war, and the deductions which they had drawn from it, he should be allowed to offer a prize of £100 for an essay upon the mode in which a British army could under modern conditions best meet a Continental army in the field.

‘ Though I was only a subaltern, my circumstances, as I

\* This was written during the South African War.

have described them, were so favourable that I ventured to compete for the prize, though I knew that officers of far greater experience than mine would at such a time be keen to secure it. That I was not deceived as to the interest which the offer would excite was disclosed when the award of the arbiter was announced. Officers of all ranks had competed. Colonel Hamley, than whom no one then stood higher in the estimate of the army as an authority on war, had been chosen to adjudge the prizes. The favourable circumstances which I have described had enabled me to gain it, but after awarding it to me, in the stately language of which he was so perfect a master, Colonel Hamley announced that there were at least eight other essays which it would be a loss to military literature not to publish. The anonymity of the essays had been preserved by the transmission of the names of the candidates in a sealed envelope to the Duke of Wellington. Six were ultimately selected for publication. All the writers most generously consented that their names should be disclosed, though among them was one General, Crauford, and Colonel Sir Garnet Wolseley, whose life had been spent both in active warfare and the study of his profession, who had just returned from the triumph of the Red River campaign. He was then at the War Office, and had already been the most important adviser of Mr. Cardwell in the working out of his reforms of the army. Of these, my two most distinguished competitors, both wrote to say that they preferred my essay to their own. General Crauford at once set about through French connections to arrange for its translation into French. My lifelong friendship with Lord Wolseley began by his immediately offering me, as a consequence of my success, the best appointment that was open to a subaltern when he went soon afterwards to command in the Ashantee expedition.

‘I may add further the statement which reached me from friends in Germany, that at the time the Germans preferred the essay to any deductions which had been made by their own officers.’

The letter from Colonel (afterwards Sir Edward) Hamley to the Duke of Wellington, referred to above, runs as follows :

‘ After a careful consideration of the tactical essays, thirty-seven in number, which your Grace’s offer of a prize has called forth, I am enabled to select that which appears to me to possess the highest degree of merit, and which I forward for the identification of the writer.

‘ Of this essay I have formed a high opinion. It may be doubted whether any essay in any language has handled the subject with a more comprehensive and vigorous grasp, or discussed it with more logical precision, than that which I recommend for the prize. It displays in an eminent degree the qualities which it was the object of the prize to elicit—namely, knowledge of the theory of modern war, extensive reading of contemporary military literature, and the power of drawing from theory and fact new and original deductions. Were this essay the only result of the offer of the prize, it would be one on which your Grace might be justly congratulated.’

The essay is in two parts. The first deals with the changes in organization and system of training required to make our army effective under the conditions of contemporary war ; the second is concerned with the tactical lessons of the campaign of 1870-71.

The main contentions of the first part of the essay were that our first business in military reform should be to devise a suitable war organization for our army, and adapt our peace organization and system of training to it as closely as circumstances permitted ; our next business, to make every combatant officer, each in his proper sphere, responsible for the training of the men whom he commanded. As the book\* has long been out of print, and is now hardly to be found, save on the shelves of the military libraries,

\* “The System of Field Manœuvres best adapted for enabling our Troops to meet a Continental Army.” William Blackwood and Sons, 1872.



it may be well to quote the following extract, which not only gives the author's conclusions, but also outlines the general programme of army reform to which a great part of his life was devoted :

' To sum up, our manœuvring in the field can no longer be regulated by a system of prescribed words of command. Its precision, its harmony, and its success, will depend instead upon a certain trained aptitude for working together, acquired by the whole army and by every individual in it. This aptitude cannot be developed unless in some way or other those men who in war time are to work together have been, as a rule, accustomed to work together in peace time. This also is more, not less, necessary, because it will be essential that men who have worked little or not at all together before should in emergencies be able to work freely together. There the absolute tactical deduction stops.

' In the complete application of these principles other considerations, with which this essay is in no way concerned, have to be taken into account. It is obvious that an extreme difficulty presents itself in the application in detail of the local corps system to England. The German armies of defence and of offence differ little in size from one another. With us the case is far otherwise, and this and various other matters determine the exact form in which the tactical result can best be secured. But the tactical necessity that the men who have to co-operate with one another in presence of the enemy shall have worked together beforehand applies to each particular army that may be engaged in war. It is a matter altogether distinct from the question of the administrative convenience of local organization, whether as to effective peace service or rapid mobilization.

\* \* \* \* \*

' The first six or seven years of service tend to fix the whole style of an officer's work afterwards. If the habit be once acquired of being never entrusted with authority in even a limited degree, and of leaning always on the mere

dictation of others, it becomes extremely difficult in later life for any man to shake himself free from it, and either willingly to assume responsibility or—for the two things almost universally run together—to delegate power. Yet for the present condition of war a readiness to assume responsibility if necessary, a knowledge when to assume it, and a capacity for guiding others without dictating to them, are, as we must believe if we listen to those who have seen recent fighting, more needful than all theoretical training, than all other practical experience. The same principle of giving a definite sphere of duty to each man, and of making him responsible for it, applies strictly to the lower grades. As far as possible, each corporal must be responsible for certain six definite men, and each sergeant always for the same twelve. Each should be as much understood to be so in his own degree as a captain is known to be responsible for his company.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘It will take far more frequent practice to insure aptitude than to cultivate memory. To prevent freedom of manœuvring from degenerating into incoherent independence and eccentricity will be no easily accomplished task. Now, the aptitude which must be both developed and regulated consists chiefly in attaching their proper value to local circumstances, yet in not sacrificing to these what is necessary for perfect co-operation with others.

‘How can this be adequately acquired except by men who are accustomed from time to time to work together in large numbers? It by no means follows that the greater portion of drill should consist in such large manœuvres. Rigid formations will still be a most essential means of early training, and be also best adapted to most marches out of the immediate reach of the enemy. It is important that any details that can be suppressed should be done away with, in order that troops may be able to devote as much time as possible to perfectly mastering those which continue to be practical and to acquiring field aptitude. But

always enough will remain to demand much time. No one who has watched the effect of much loose work upon ill-trained troops will doubt that as a means of discipline parade drill will be more, not less, essential than ever, little as it continues to be applicable to the purpose for which it was first designed.'

Thirty years after these words were written effect was given to the writer's main proposals. It required a generation of strenuous struggle on the part of the reformers and a great war to convince the nation of what is now seen to be obvious.

'By the time the essay was published,'\* he wrote some years later, 'the motive force of public opinion which had enabled Mr. Cardwell to introduce his reforms was spent. All those who had been engaged in carrying them out were scattered. Lord Northbrook and Lord Cromer (then Major Baring), who had been two of the most active agents, were in India, and out of touch with what was taking place in Europe. Sir Garnet Wolseley was almost immediately engaged in preparations for the Ashantee campaign. Nevertheless, a few years later † a shadowy idea of the value of some such organization so far survived, after all the essential points of the argument had been forgotten, that my friend Colonel Home was directed at the Intelligence Department to endeavour to adapt the army to an army corps system. Without public interest, without expenditure, without any such cause of excitement as the conquest of France, the task, as he well knew, was impossible. I was working under him at the time, so that I know perfectly well all that he hoped to achieve by that much-derided paper scheme. He thought it possible that by setting out the ideal forms of army corps, and leaving blanks where deficiencies existed, he would be able to draw attention to the hopelessly heterogeneous nature of our various forces. More than that it was impossible for him at that time to achieve.'

The tactical portions of the essay contained the first in-

\* 1872.

† 1878.



dications in English of the principles which should guide the training and employment of an army under modern conditions. Written at a time when there were no official instructions on the subject, they were the precursors of the present Field Service Regulations, which govern the employment of our army in war.

The manner in which the essay was written is in many ways characteristic of my father's methods of work. Throughout his life he rarely put pen to paper till he had thought out completely what he intended to say. He used even to shape his phrases definitely in his mind, and was often to be heard, walking up and down in his study, declaiming portions of the work on which he was engaged. He inherited from his father a dislike for the mechanical labour of writing, and postponed it to the last possible moment. When he began, he wrote at a great pace, and usually made very few corrections in his proofs. At this time he was in great anxiety as to the health of his father, who died at Cambridge a few weeks after the essay was completed. Such time as he could spare was occupied in visits to his father's sick-bed ; it was only in response to his wife's urgings that he began to write when there was barely time to get the requisite number of words on paper. The essay had to reach Colonel Hamley at the Staff College before March 1, in duplicate, and one of the conditions was that it was not to be in the handwriting of the competitor. On the evening of February 29 his wife and a secretary were still engaged in copying the pages as he tossed them from his desk. It was past eleven before this work was completed ; a page-boy was sent over with the parcel from the Military College, with instructions that it was to be put into Colonel Hamley's hands at the Staff College before midnight. The Colonel had gone to bed, and the boy insisted on having him fetched downstairs. When Colonel Hamley learned the cause of the interruption to his slumbers his language was forcible, and he threw the essay into a corner, vowing that he would read it last.

## II

### Active Service : Ashantee—Zululand—Pursuit of Cetewayo—The Sekukuni Expedition.

THE immediate result of Lieutenant Maurice's success was that Sir Garnet Wolseley, who had never heard of him before, offered him the post of Military Secretary on his staff when he was appointed to the command of the expedition against Koffi, King of Ashantee. As the War Office refused to sanction the appointment of a subaltern to a post of this importance, Sir Garnet took him out to Ashantee as a special service officer, and made him his private secretary. One of the chief problems in this campaign was the climate. The Government were unwilling both to send to the West Coast of Africa one white soldier more than was absolutely necessary, and to keep English troops in a fever-stricken country a day longer than could be avoided. Thus the band of officers who accompanied Sir Garnet from England was composed of staff officers to make the preliminary preparations, and special service officers to train and lead native levies. They were employed, during the first phase of the operations, first in finding out what British troops would be required, and secondly in preparing the way for these British troops, when they did come, to strike a swift and decisive blow. Of the party were many whose names have since become famous in the army—men who were destined to follow their chief in a number of other campaigns, and to support him, when not fighting, in the still harder struggle for military efficiency. They included Lieutenant-Colonel (now Sir) Evelyn Wood, Major (afterwards Sir) Baker Russell, Captain (afterwards Sir) Redvers Buller,

Major (afterwards Colonel) Home, Captain (now Sir) Henry Brackenbury, and were joined later by Colonel (afterwards Sir) George Colley and Captain (afterwards Sir) William Butler. Together they formed as remarkable a body of officers as have ever been assembled for a specific purpose by a British General, and testify to Lord Wolseley's judgment of men. Of the thirty who sailed from England in September, 1873, only two escaped serious illness. Sir Garnet Wolseley was himself attacked by fever, and was for three weeks nursed devotedly by his secretary, the foundation of the intimate friendship which united the two men, until Maurice's death, dating from this incident.

As private secretary to the Commander-in-Chief of the West African Settlements, Lieutenant Maurice was charged chiefly with the correspondence with the Colonial Office ; but his duties allowed him ample opportunities for gaining experience under fire, and he took part in every one of the principal engagements of the campaign. In a letter, dated October 31, 1873, he gives the following description of the country :

' The appearance of these bush paths is quite unlike anything else in the world. In the middle is the actual track itself, barely wide enough to allow one man to pass. To right and left the bush has been often at some time or other cleared to a few yards in width, especially in the immediate neighbourhood of villages. Over this cleared ground there grow again immediately creepers and flowering plants innumerable. Sometimes the space from the pathway to the dense bush is covered with one delicate green mass of feathery sensitive plant, which, as the rough foot of the passenger touches it, quivers and closes before him. More often it is interlaced with strings and ropes of creepers, some of exquisite delicacy, some of vigorous strength, which clamber and tangle, and twist with one another in a strange confusion of colour and form. At times the ground is saffron with one delicate plant ; at times it is blue or purple with



another; and now again they mix and mass, and set one another off with those strangely artistic touches of which Nature in her glory alone is capable. And over all the glowing sun is now fast throwing his ever more intense rays, which as yet only light up all these beauties, but will ere long fade and scorch them, till by nightfall scarcely one flower will be seen, where fifty seemed almost to light up the ground in the morning. All this display, glorious and varied as it is, crowds itself in between, or barely crests the top of bushes on either hand so dense that they form walls usually almost as impenetrable as if they were rigid, though rigidity is the last quality which the eye attributes to their ever-changing form. For the most part, nothing is to be seen beyond the bank eight feet or so high, and a few yards back on either side.'

On the nature of the fighting he wrote in February, 1874 :

'It was impossible to see the enemy at all. Fire therefore had to be directed against the point where the enemy was supposed to be. But whilst the intense clatter of the breech-loader firing was going on, it was impossible to know certainly whether the Ashantees had fallen back or not, for usually their fire was completely subdued during the actual continuance of ours, and broke out again the moment ours ceased. The falls of the ground were absolutely hidden by the bush, and if the enemy took full advantage of this it might well happen that our fire produced hardly any effect except at very close range. Hence the greatest delay was certain to be from any fire which broke out on our side, as it sometimes did by a kind of infection, when there was little or no fire on the opposite side. For till it ceased it was impossible to tell whether the Ashantees' fire was really subdued or not, and therefore advance was impossible. The one thing that was always essential for the officers was, therefore, a perfect calmness and coolness, not merely personal, but infectious, if one may venture so to say. And here it was that there was brought home to one the quite

incalculable value of the presence of men too much accustomed to the circumstances of action to be even momentarily, or apparently, subdued by them. There possibly was never a kind of fighting the actual danger of which was more likely to be exaggerated in the minds of men who were new to the sounds and sights of such things.'

He had more than one opportunity of putting his own principles into practice. An eyewitness describes how, after the defeat of the Ashantees at Amoaful, Maurice was with a party of Houssas engaged in following up the retreating enemy, when fire was opened suddenly upon them from the bush in front. The Houssas, led and trained by a splendid body of English officers, acquitted themselves gallantly in the campaign, but on this occasion for once they lost their heads. Facing outwards, they began to fire as rapidly as possible into the bush on their flanks. A form of catalepsy which attacks even the best troops under fire seized upon them, and no orders or appeals from their officers could induce them to cease fire or resume their advance. Maurice walked to one flank of the line of excited men, seized each man's rifle in turn, and, putting it to his shoulder, explained to him there was nothing to fire at in that direction. Before he completed his task his coat was singed by the flash from the rifle of one Houssa. Though the Ashantee slugs were flying freely, he acted as quietly and methodically as if he were inspecting rifles on parade.

During the campaign he acted as correspondent of the *Daily News*, and subsequently reproduced his letters in the form of 'A Popular History of the Ashantee War.' He was twice mentioned in despatches, but as a subaltern he was not eligible for brevet promotion, and the Distinguished Service Order, which was instituted by Queen Victoria to meet such cases, had not yet been founded, so he received no reward beyond the medal and clasps.

On his return home he was posted to the Royal Horse

Artillery at Woolwich, where he remained until he was promoted Captain in 1875. He then served in Canada for two years, during which he made many friends among Canadians, and saw much of the country. He was naturally interested in the Canadian local forces, and brought back with him to England the germ of the idea which has within the last few years grown into the system of exchange of officers between the Imperial Government and the Dominions now carried out under the ægis of the Imperial General Staff.

‘The colonies,’ he wrote in January, 1880, ‘are not only ready, but are most of them anxious, to contribute their share to the expense of Imperial defence within their own part of the world. We have therefore an enormous reserve of strength, a supply of men of English blood, intensely English in their feeling and spirit, hardy, vigorous, and active, only asking to be employed. Despite its war-like form, the desire for all that is at bottom a purely defensive and peaceful one. Two causes which have produced the present wish for increased strength—among the Australian colonies, for example—are the determination to exclude foreign criminals, and the knowledge that a short time ago the Australian seaboard was in serious danger of a Russian raid before help could be brought from England. In order that the powerful aid of allies of our own blood should be furnished to the Mother-Country, only one thing is wanting to them—a supply of trained professional officers. We have lately furnished the Australian colonies, as we have previously done other colonies, with a small number of officers to be employed for five years in special staff positions. This is, as far as it goes, a very excellent arrangement, but it requires extension. Can we supply these additional officers without cost to the Imperial Exchequer, and at the same time confer upon the colonies a boon which they will keenly appreciate, and will tend to cement their loyalty to the Imperial connection? I am convinced that we can. From



my experience in Canada, I know that there are many men serving in the local forces who are anxious to take their duties seriously, but who find it extremely difficult to acquire the necessary knowledge and gain the necessary experience. Many of these men would be quite prepared to come home and serve for a term in our army for such pay and allowances as the Canadian Government would be disposed to give them. All that they ask is that they should be taken seriously, and not merely be allowed to attend Aldershot field-days as spectators, but be given a definite responsibility in our squadrons, batteries, and companies. I am further convinced that we on our side can add to the number of competent instructors in the colonies with the greatest possible advantage to our own service, removing what tends to become a scandal in the eyes of not a few taxpayers, who do not understand all the motives which determine our present system of retirement.

‘A few years ago, just prior to the Crimean War, the English army was reduced to a condition of inefficiency, mainly because of the senility of its officers in all its ranks. Of this defect, the corps in which promotion was based on seniority—the Artillery and Engineers—furnished the most conspicuous examples. Captains of artillery were often men approaching sixty years of age, physically unfitted for the work they had to do. Other ranks were in a similar condition. In order to prevent the extension to the whole army, now that purchase has been abolished, of a similar condition of things, every Committee or Commission that has investigated the facts has recommended that men should be retired, not only at the head of our seniority lists, but in each separate rank, because a man may be well fitted by his age and vigour for a senior rank who is utterly unfitted to perform the work of a junior rank. For efficiency in our service this rule is indispensable. Nevertheless, the result is that men are frequently turned out of the army with small pensions at an age when they are thoroughly competent to do good work. Their whole life has fitted

them to be trainers of soldiers, and to be nothing else. Some of these, more especially in the junior ranks, we do require to keep at home for use on mobilization, but we have many more retired Lieutenant-Colonels than we can well use. Among these are very many men who would supply precisely the class that would be most valuable in the colonies. They are not so employed because it is prohibited. It is ruled that, as long as a man idles away his time, or goes on the Stock Exchange, or from a military point of view becomes a thoroughly useless subject, he may draw his pension, but if he takes service in a colony his pension is stopped. The pension and the retirement rules were instituted to secure a regular flow of promotion, and to prevent a tendency to senility. But it is a gain, and not a loss, to the State that retired officers should be permitted to use their trained experience in increasing the strength of the colonies. They should therefore not be debarred from undertaking such service. It is my opinion that, if some such ebb and flow of officers of the Imperial and local services could be established between the Mother-Country and the colonies, it would very soon do more to strengthen the ties which bind the Empire than any zollverein or similar expedient.'

On returning to England in 1877, Captain Maurice was appointed to the Intelligence Department, where he was employed under his old friend Colonel Home, the author of the 'Précis of Modern Tactics,' a man who was perhaps intellectually the most remarkable of those whom Wolseley had called together to work with him in Ashantee. Home's premature death soon afterwards was a heavy loss to the army. The two men were much occupied with the developments of the Russo-Turkish War and with the intricacies of the Eastern Question. They together worked out many of the details of the plan which culminated in Lord Beaconsfield sending the fleet to Constantinople, the move of the Indian contingent to Malta, and the purchase of Cyprus. When Sir

Garnet Wolseley went out as High Commissioner to organize the government of that island, he wished Maurice, who had been employed in the Intelligence Department in collecting information as to its history and topography, to accompany him ; but he could not be spared from his work in London until the spring of 1879, when he joined his old chief as Assistant-Commissioner.

In the meantime the Zulu War had broken out, and after the disaster of Isandlwana Sir Garnet Wolseley was recalled from Cyprus to take command in South Africa. Maurice went out on Wolseley's staff as Deputy-Assistant-Quarter-master-General for intelligence duties. It is well known that Wolseley's landing in Natal was delayed by bad weather, and that in the meantime Lord Chelmsford inflicted a decisive defeat on the Zulu army at Ulundi. The victory came as a great relief at home. The war was believed to be over, and the interest of the public was drawn to Afghanistan. Wolseley's operations in Zululand and the Transvaal have therefore never received the attention which they merit.

The Zulu king Cetewayo was still at large, and his capture was the necessary prelude to a permanent settlement. After disposing a cordon of troops so as to limit the king's possible movements, Wolseley, on receiving definite information of Cetewayo's whereabouts, despatched a party of mounted men under Major Barrow, of the 19th Hussars, to secure his person. Maurice accompanied this party as intelligence officer. The king was known to have fled after Ulundi northwards across the Black Umvolosi River into the wild mountain region known as the Ngome Forest. The pursuers travelled very light, taking only three days' food, which they hoped to supplement from the Zulu kraals. The chase lasted seventeen days, which, owing to the difficulties of the country and the many changes of fortune encountered—the party being at times hot on the trail, at others losing it altogether—were full of hard work, incident, and excitement. The English cavalry horses early became exhausted, and Barrow sent on Lord Gifford and Maurice,



with a detachment mainly composed of colonials and natives, to continue the pursuit. Maurice says he found a large Spanish mule his most efficient mount for the work. In a letter, dated August 20, 1879, he describes a day of the king hunt as follows :

‘ We were cut off altogether from ordinary supplies, and lived mainly by killing a beast at whatever kraal we arrived at for the night, cooking it with mealies, as Indian corn is called in this country. Our chief drink was Kaffir beer, which is made by pouring water over crushed millet and allowing it to ferment. It does not contain a great deal of alcohol, and has a curious sour flavour which is not unpleasant when one is accustomed to it. It is very thirst-quenching and sustaining. This morning we were on the White Umvolosi, and it was determined to divide the party, so as to beat up both banks of the river, Lord Gifford taking the left bank, while I with Hayes and the Basutos took the right. We soon came upon the tracks of a considerable party, and after following them up for some time sighted a party of armed Zulus carrying a chief’s stool and other insignia of rank. After a hot and exciting chase we managed to surround them, only to find that they were a minor chief and his attendants who were on their way into Ulundi to surrender to Sir Garnet.

‘ We went without further incident to the drift where we were to meet Gifford, and there found a party of officers who had ridden out on a reconnoitring expedition of their own. They told us that they had visited the kraal of one Kabanini, a minor Zulu chief who had submitted. I had received information that this man had been supplying Cetewayo with food, and knew that Gifford intended to secure his person. Fearing that this unexpected visit would have put Kabanini on the *qui vive*, I sent a messenger to the other party suggesting that we should wait till dusk to seize him. As Gifford did not appear, and it was getting towards evening, I decided to ride towards

Kabanini's kraal, and here we found the other party, but, as I feared, our Zulu friend had escaped. He had been seen by Gifford's party, but had got away after a hot chase, and in the excitement Gifford had forgotten his rendezvous with us. We found that the women were cooking an unusual quantity of meat, for it is the rarest thing for a Zulu to kill his beasts, which he keeps for barter. Two small boys we found in the kraal informed us that the women took the meat out every second day towards the Ngome Forest. This made it clear that we had found the source from which the king obtained his food, and aroused high hopes. We slept comfortably enough round huge bonfires, for the nights are very cold.'

Writing again two days later to Sir Garnet, he says :

' On Gifford's return we started about 9.30 a.m., Gifford firmly convinced we were going to nab our man then and there. A man who had been lying very unmercifully to us, and whom we had absolutely convicted of it, had received for his pains some *toko*. On this he solemnly promised to conduct us to the very spot where the king had, at least quite recently, been fed, and from which he was not known to have moved. We threatened to shoot him if he led us wrong, and he pointed out a particular piece of dense bush under a cliff in a certain valley about seven miles from here. Gifford put horsemen on every point commanding the valley round to see that no one escaped from it, and the main body of us stole round under the crest of the nearest hill that gave fair concealment till we were close to it. There we dismounted and left our horses in charge of one or two Basutos, and proceeded to beat the bush.

' Gifford was with the left. Creagh\* and I swept round to the extreme right, and then had to wait for the left to work through the bush before swinging round again. Creagh and I had reached our point and Gifford had been seen about half an hour before outside the bush on the left, when suddenly

\* Sir Garnet Wolseley's Aide-de-Camp, now Major-General Creagh.

bang, bang! went a set of our rifles, and again bang, bang, bang! We made sure that they had nabbed the king, and that his people were either showing fight or endeavouring to get through. You may imagine how we tore up the slope over the most infernal ground, and then through the mimosa bush, where the stones were just as bad, only they threw you on to mimosa when you fell, instead of on to other stones. On we went towards the point where the sound seemed to come from, fresh firing being repeated as we ran. When, utterly pumped and beaten, we got outside the bush, you can fancy how disgusted we were to find that the cause of the shots had been that one of our "guides," to whom Gifford had given the charge of four prisoners, whom we trusted to guide us under threats if they misbehaved, had allowed first one to escape, then sent two others after him to find him, and of course lost all three, one only remaining. The fellow made me more savage by informing me that he had been seven years in the bush, and knew that you could not keep a prisoner in it. I did not swear at him, but I do not think he liked his five minutes with me. The worst of it was that not only had the useless run taken it out of us utterly, but that it put our whole move out of gear. Gifford was right up under the cliff, and I did not see him till our beat was over.

'I don't think we fairly covered the whole ground as we advanced again. But no doubt the Basutos checked the possibility of discerning new tracks, of which they found none. Gifford, however, came upon the place that had evidently been prepared for the king, the ground beaten down and cleared, etc. We expect it is one of several places to which he goes, changing his position daily. Though he never travels far, and is very close to these neighbouring kraals which form his supply depots, there is an amount of ground to be beaten, to get him actually, which is too much for our small number of mounted men. The result of the day was, therefore, first to make us all pretty well done up for the moment. Creagh, I am bound to say, stood the run



much better than I did, being much less pumped and able to go on, which rather disgusted me, as I always fancy myself able to stand a good deal that way ; but I was too heavily dressed, and I suppose that, as it was an intensely hot day, the little touch of the sun I had on our first day out probably told against me. Secondly, to decide us to take a new departure, as the Yankees say.

‘ We propose to organize a body of Zulus who are willing to try to bring in the king. At many kraals they declare piteously that they wish to heaven he was taken, as they cannot venture to plant or do anything else, are in fear of him and fear of us, and they show in every way a disposition to help us. Immediately after the beat was over, therefore, Gifford took a party of ten men, and went off to a kraal said to belong to Ottaen. Thence he has brought six men, who declare themselves eager to ferret out the king from these dongas. Their people and friends have, they say, over and over again been smelt out by the king, and they are dying for the chance of vengeance. They came on with Gifford most willingly. Of course, however, these gentlemen need watching, and I shall therefore be much obliged if you will send me all the men I have in camp at Ulundi, after having the job they are to do explained to them, and any who are not willing and zealous volunteers sent home at once. I shall so have three independent chiefs besides Maguenda, and these will, I hope, be a sufficient check on each other and on any we get here. Of course by-and-by we shall simply make it a condition, “ Your cattle or your help,” but we must have a secure check first, as to those who come, that they are working really to do the thing.

‘ I don’t think Gifford enjoys this job as much as I do. He is so intensely anxious and so tremendously hard-working that I think he does not half feel the fun of the whole business. Of course our positions are very different. All responsibility and worry devolves on him, but to me it seems as if it ought to be advertised on the world’s stage as, “ Serio-Comic—positively for three nights only. The

Catching of Catchwayo. Wild Sport in South Africa. Hunting the Sable Monarch."'

To add to the excitement of the hunt, the district was infested with a quite unusual number of lions, which were heard roaring round the camp fires. One night three horses belonging to Maurice's party were killed by these beasts.

By a curious chance of war, the honour of capturing the king fell, not to those who had hunted him down and cornered him, but to a third party which came upon the scene almost by chance. Lord Gifford on August 23 had definitely tracked Cetewayo into a kraal in the Ngome Forest, only after many hours of arduous marching. Not knowing what resistance he might expect, he decided to rest his men, call up Maurice's party, which had been working in the neighbourhood, but by another route, and to wait till dusk to rush the kraal. As all information showed that the king and his party were absolutely worn out by the relentless pursuit, there appeared to be no danger of his getting away.

Meantime a party of King's Dragoon Guards had been sent out from headquarters, which had been kept posted by Maurice as to the course of events. This party, commanded by Major Marter, had no definite information of Lord Gifford's latest movements, but had the good fortune to light upon a Zulu who gave them a strong hint as to the king's whereabouts. Acting promptly upon this, Marter came to the top of a big bluff overlooking the south side of the kraal, which Lord Gifford was watching on the north. Marter dismounted his men, scrambled down the mountain-side, rushed the kraal, and seized the king from under the very noses of those who, after close on three weeks of arduous toil, were hoping to bring their hunt to a glorious conclusion. Without diminishing in any way the credit due to Major Marter for the readiness with which he seized his opportunity, it may be said that the creation of that opportunity was almost entirely the work of Lord Gifford and Maurice.

The capture of Cetewayo brought the Zulu War to a

definite conclusion, but many difficulties still faced Sir Garnet Wolseley. The Boers were in a very restive condition, and many of the younger men, encouraged by our early failures in Zululand, were talking openly of declaring a republic. Sir Garnet determined that the best way of re-establishing our prestige in the Transvaal would be to lead an expedition against Sekukuni, a native chief who had long defied both Briton and Boer, and had established a robber's fastness in the hilly country between the Oliphant and Steelpoort Rivers, about 150 miles north-west of Pretoria and 50 miles north-east of Lydenburg. From this stronghold Sekukuni had long harried all who came within his reach. The Boers had already failed in an attempt to drive him out, and Sir Garnet considered that he would be both conferring a lasting benefit upon them, and at the same time impress them with a sense of our power, if he succeeded in removing this thorn in their side.

As Sekukuni's country and the approaches thereto were ravaged by horse-sickness, the provision of the transport necessary to feed a considerable force of British troops would have been a costly and difficult business. Sir Garnet therefore formed his force largely of native contingents under British officers, with a small stiffening of white troops. The Boers were themselves accustomed to employ friendlies in their operations against native chiefs, and the desire to show that we could beat them at their own game was a further inducement to Sir Garnet to follow the policy he had sketched out. After considerable difficulties in collecting supplies, the advance began on October 23, and by November 28 the expedition was ready to assault Sekukuni's main stronghold, which consisted of a large kopje riddled with caves and rudely fortified. The actual command of the assaulting column was given by Sir Garnet to Colonel Baker Russell, who divided his force into three bodies. Major (now Major-General Sir Frederick) Carrington commanded the left attack, and Maurice accompanied him as his staff officer. Carrington's force consisted mainly of the Zoutpansburg



native contingent. The attack was completely successful, but for a moment the native levies hung back, because, it is believed, they wished to see how the British officers would behave, having more than once on similar occasions been left in the lurch by the cautious Boers. When it was clear that there was no doubt as to the determination of their leaders, they surged gallantly forward, and in a short time the kopje was in our hands. While leading forward the Zoutpansburg men Maurice was shot down at close range from the mouth of a cave, the bullet penetrating his right shoulder and lung, splintering the bone. He remained in action until victory was assured, and was able to report personally to Sir Garnet the success of the left column. Maurice figures in all the returns as slightly wounded, for, on discovering that he was to be reported as dangerously wounded, he made use of his position on the headquarter staff to have the record altered so that his wife might not be alarmed. He was invalided home, and on the conclusion of the campaign was mentioned in despatches and received the brevet of Major.

### III

Life of his Father—The 1882 Campaign in Egypt—‘Hostilities without Declaration of War’—The Nile Campaign.

MAURICE employed the leisure which convalescence allowed him in continuing a work on which he had been engaged for some years. He had decided immediately after F. D. Maurice's death to undertake himself the preparation of the story of his father's life for publication. The plan which he had formed he describes himself in his preface :

‘I have habitually used the letters as the substantive part of the biography ; it is not a “Life *and* Letters.” No single letter is here given except for the purpose of adding something to the story of the Life, either as to facts or as to the development of thought and character. Wherever any information was necessary to complete the biography, it has been given. Nothing whatever has been kept back or concealed as to my father. My sole object has been to present him as he was, but, as I believe this is best done by allowing his conduct, as it shows itself in the action he took and the decisions at which he arrived, to speak for itself, I have tried, without rejecting other sources of information, to give as nearly as possible an autobiography.’

This scheme involved a careful selection from some fifty years of voluminous correspondence. It was naturally more laborious than a biography told in the author's own words. The work therefore proceeded slowly, and was much interrupted by calls to active service and frequent changes of station. Some of his father's associates began to chafe at the delay, and were not unnaturally doubtful as to whether the young soldier had either the capacity or the leisure to do

justice to a work involving the handling of religious and sociological controversies in which some of the acutest intellects of the time had taken part. Tom Hughes wrote in May, 1880 :

' I am moved to write to you about the Life : 'cos why ? —folk are coming back to London, and I have been seeing here one and there another of the old friends, much interested in the matter, and every one of them in the same mind —anxious to hear what is being done, which nobody, by the way, that I can hear of, knows anything about ; desirous that there should be no delay that can be helped ; and ready to do anything they can. I won't say they don't trust you, but they are a little tired of living on faith. Are you getting on, and when do you hope to be able to fix an approximate time for publication ? The deaths of Kingsley and Clark\* have made sad holes in the number of those who could have helped materially—Clark especially, as he was the one authority on the " Kingdom of Christ " time and early relations to the Quakers. I hear that he has left scarcely any of his recollections of your father, which he always wished to write, and no doubt would have written if we had poked him up properly three years ago. However, what's gone is gone, and it is only the more necessary to get what can be got now ; if your ideas are settled, send them along and let us see what we can do to help. If not, it is high time they were. The remaining three or four of the old set may go off just as suddenly. Haven't I had rheumatism this summer, and Davies bronchitis, Strachey everything under the sun, and Ludlow—is he not always shaky ?'

Maurice had undertaken to present the story of his father's life to the public only after deep reflection, which had convinced him that he understood the workings of his father's mind more completely than did any of the ' old set,' to many of whom F. D. Maurice was, in the words of Gladstone,

\* The Quaker to whom F. D. Maurice's ' Kingdom of Christ ' is addressed. Afterwards the Rev. S. Clark, M.A., Rector of Bredwardine, and one of the revisers of the Old Testament.



‘something of an enigma.’ In a letter to his uncle, Dr. Plumtre, Dean of Wells, written when the work on the biography was well advanced, he strikes the keynote of his conception of his father’s spirit :

‘ We most of us have in relation to nearly all questions certain opinions, in which we see no error ; otherwise we should change them. But in relation to every other human being born we are conscious to ourselves that, however much we reverence him, there are certain parts of his position, opinion, or character, in which we detect what appears to us weakness or error. Notably, on a larger scale, you notice that Frenchmen attribute to Englishmen certain faults which we, on the other hand, look upon as peculiarly French ; nay, Mahometans also and Hindoos do in fact attribute to Christians those very errors and crimes which we think peculiarly theirs. Most of us look upon it as the main business and duty of our lives to bring other men over to our opinions. Now, all this my father met by the simple assertion : “ The Gospel is not a question of opinions at all. We who have to deliver it have to deliver it as a message of the Good News that the Righteous King is actually reigning upon earth over Mahometans, Romanists, Protestants, etc., and that the one duty of all men, whether Mahometans, Romanists, or Protestants, is to listen to His voice, which does speak to them if they will hear it. They may meet us with the assertion that these are mere opinions of ours. We can never rebut that charge by endeavouring to induce them to change their opinions for ours. We must appeal to the voice which they recognize that they hear. “ I ought ”—“ I ought not.” In His house are many mansions. His word takes many forms. It speaks in earthquake to some, in the still, small voice to others, in the history of nations to others, in their own history and life to all.

‘ Every effort, therefore, to form a clique which He has not formed—that is to say, which is narrower than humanity—is in its essence criminal, be it Romanist, Ritualistic, Anglican, Broad Church, or other. The laws and order of the world

are God's laws and order—nations as much as individuals are under God's government, which is actually, not theoretically, built up from the family relationships to national relationships; and through all these God is educating you and me, your nation and mine. It is not my business to make proselytes, to upset existing relationships, for the sake of making your opinions coincide with mine; but it is to open my own ears, which are very hard of hearing, and, if you think I can help you, to open yours to the teaching which every event in life is supplying, which you may hear in every symbol which you are in the habit of using, if you will not make them into idols, whether of bread or of gold. You know that you ought not to make them into idols; your indignant repudiation comes at once when you are charged with it. So does the Hindoo's; so did the Athenian's to St. Paul. I appeal as he did to you to use your father's forms as long as you can, but to address them to the living God who is declared in them.

'But I may be wrong in my interpretation of the voice. The Unerring Master who is teaching is not less right because I, the scholar, misunderstand Him. I must be most careful not to assume at any moment that my education is finished, and that all I have to do is to instruct you in what I have learned. You have been learning as well as I. I must listen to the Master's voice as echoed by you even when I differ most from you. Often I may see that you have a truth to utter which will be simply destroyed if, instead of giving it its full force, I supply men with my upshot from your thinking and mine. Therefore, fully to express the light which I think flashes forth from the very conflict of opinions, I must endeavour always to state the opposite case to my own in the very strongest way that I possibly can: not in the most convincing way—that is not our affair at all, yours or mine—but in the way that will bring out all the truth that speaks through it. To attempt to put your words or mine in a merely convincing way is to confuse the purpose at which we ought to aim, which is,

not that I should bring you over to my opinions, or you me to yours, but that we should help one another to hear what the Master is saying."

' Now, I maintain that it followed inevitably from such a position that he should both hate Ritualism in the way Gladstone defines it, and yet treat with reverence the forms in which Ritualists found expression for their faith.\* If any Ritualist had said, " I do not worship the God who lives and who is found of them that diligently seek Him, who has been perfectly revealed in Christ, and who cannot be excluded from any part of His Universe, but I do worship a God included in an Idol of Bread and a God of Magical Enchantment," he would certainly have accepted that Ritualist's statement that they worshipped different gods. But he would none the less have believed that Christ was educating that Ritualist, and would " punish " him, as well as my father himself, " both here and hereafter," in so far as punishment was necessary to bring him nearer to Himself. I quote the part of the last sentence between inverted commas from a letter of my father's, as I do also this which follows from memory : " It seems to me that I am appointed to be the enemy of all parties that I may be the uniter of all men." Now, I say that that is not presenting two sides of the shield, but that both parts are necessary to complete the one picture.

' I fear that your letter will practically have the effect of leaving an increased impression that what my father was really at was one of those things " no fellah can understand." In my judgment, this is an instance when his meaning is absolutely plain to those who will take the trouble to read it. You will, I hope, understand that I am not in the least writing to defend the correctness of his position. I admit at once that it has that against it which is to so many absolutely fatal. I believe it to be the one thing of which it can

\* Dr. Plumtre's letter, to which this is a reply, referred to the fact that F. D. Maurice had attended Ritualistic services while expressing in his writings disagreement with many of the principles of the Ritualists.



be said, "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus." All men are agreed, each that what he thinks is true. I admit at once that I do not know any one of those who look up to my father, who adopts in practice this habit of considering that the important thing is to get at the truth which God is teaching all men, not at a demonstration of the particular positions assumed by the speaker. I admit at once that during my whole life I have never heard anyone but my father who appeared to speak habitually under that conviction, and who therefore utterly avoided bringing forward any specious argument on his own side, not merely because he believed it dishonest, but because it was confusing the issue—that is, tending to make the truth which the Great Educator is bringing out less clear. I admit at once, therefore, that it is my father *contra mundum*, and naturally in such a cause I have no wish to assume the office of judge. But I do say that the intellectual position is clear, intelligible, and complete, is perfectly easy to be understood by all men, however much they may dislike it, and I may add incidentally, that though the world by its actions unanimately votes against him, yet against any man's actual position he can undoubtedly carry it; for there are no two, even Romanists, in all details agreed as to what that truth is, for the sake of which the Great Teacher's voice speaking amidst the jar of human error is to be silenced.'

Following a short tour of duty at the artillery depot at Newbridge, Major Maurice was appointed Brigade-Major, Royal Artillery, Cork District, and was at Cork when, in the summer of 1882, Arabi's revolution in Egypt again called him to the field, and postponed the publication of the *Life*, which was nearing completion. He was appointed by Sir Garnet Wolseley Deputy - Assistant - Adjutant and Quartermaster-General on the headquarters staff of the expeditionary force, and as such had much to do with the working out of the plans for the change of base from Alexandria to Ismailia, by which Sir Garnet hoodwinked Arabi, and with the detailed arrangements for the advance to Tel-el-Kebir. His

papers dealing with his personal part in the campaign have, unfortunately, been lost, but he has left on record an account of an incident in connection with the advanced guard action at El Magfar which is of interest :

‘ Afterwards in Cairo, when I was going over with the Prussian military attaché the records of the campaign, he pitched upon the day of that fight (El Magfar), August 24, as the most brilliant in the whole history of the war. To any soldier who understands what war is the reason is clear. It is precisely because of the rapid decision of the General, taken in presence of the enemy, to risk remaining where he was, with the very small force which he had in hand, in order to inflict a crushing defeat as soon as his own troops should come up ; I was with him the whole day, and saw him form that decision. So distinctly was the purpose with which Lord Wolseley set out for El Magfar one, and the purpose with which he remained there another, that we all started with the assured conviction that we should return in time for breakfast. It was the only time in my life that I did make that particular mistake of counting on my return for food, so I, as well as everyone else on the staff, had good reason to remember it. None of us—not excepting Lord Wolseley himself—had taken a crumb of anything with us in our holsters. The troops of course had had their rations served out to them. Lord Wolseley himself, despite the remonstrances of all of us, insisted in standing out all day in the full sun, in order to give by his visible presence encouragement to the men, which, as we all assured him, was really not necessary. He returned at night without having tasted any food for fifteen hours but a part of a water-melon brought him by the sailors, and after that exhausting and exciting day sent off, before tasting food, his telegraphic despatch.’

Maurice was present at all the principal engagements in the short campaign, and on its conclusion was awarded the brevet of Lieutenant-Colonel.

As soon as he could settle down and collect his materials, he set about completing his father's biography, which was published in the spring of 1884. This is probably his chief literary achievement; but as it and the military works, which later made his reputation, appeal to two distinct classes of readers, it has come about that those who understand the value of the one know of the others mainly by hearsay, and *vice versa*, so that a just comparison is difficult. The book was most cordially received by F. D. Maurice's intimates, by the public, and by the press. Tom Hughes, on seeing the final proofs, wrote :

' I cannot tell you how I have enjoyed them, or how completely they have converted me as to the delay in getting the book done. I take back all I have ever said (not much) or thought about it, and can only wonder at the amount of thought and work which it must have taken to compress so much into that space, without omitting anything of real importance, so far as I can remember, and yet without overloading. Whether this generation will care for it as they ought may be doubtful, but I think they must, as the magazines are teeming with rubbish on the fringe of the great controversies which your father handled with such wondrous mastery. At any rate, all the men who really think will be thankful to you for the rest of their lives.'

Among the many tributes which my father received came the following from Gladstone :

' I read through the whole of the Life of Maurice which you were so kind as to send me. The picture of him as a Christian soul is one of the most touching, searching, and complete, that I have ever seen in print. It is indeed a spiritual splendour, to borrow the phrase of Dante about St. Dominic.'

The Life to this day continues to be almost a textbook to the ever-widening circle of those who seek from F. D. Maurice inspiration in dealing with the religious and social



problems of the time. The present Archbishop of Canterbury, writing immediately after my father's death, said :

' I should like to say how immensely I have always valued, not his life and example only, but the distinctive and most remarkable bit of service which he rendered to us all in his Life of his father. I have constantly pointed to these volumes as a striking example of how a really competent thoughtful man can make a big book and a long story *live* by the way he handles and arranges it. The headlines in that book, at the top of every page, are an almost unique instance of how that sort of Life (with comparatively little to *narrate*) can be summarized in a series, so to speak, of epigrams, so as to carry even the dullest reader along. And it is no mere "trick" of method. It means the grip which one big mind can take of the thoughts of another, and that, surely, has been one of the secrets of his power in all his varied work.'

While completing the biography in his spare time, Maurice was engaged in the War Office upon two works of a very different description. Shortly before the outbreak of war in Egypt, the proposal to construct a tunnel under the Channel had so far matured as to merit investigation, first by a Committee of the Board of Trade, and subsequently by a Joint Committee of both Houses. Sir Thomas (afterwards Lord) Farrer, the Chairman of the Board of Trade Committee, had inquired, in December, 1881, whether it was probable that war would be declared against us without any previous strain or notice, and whether such a thing had happened on any single occasion within the last fifty or one hundred years. The War Office was directed to investigate this question, and Maurice was charged with the work. The outcome of this was the publication in 1883 of his 'Hostilities without Declaration of War.' It was thought, when the investigation was started, that there would prove to be a sufficient number of cases in which war was begun without warning to show the fallacy of relying upon time to take final defensive measures, such as the destruction of the tunnel. The result was more

conclusive than the most determined opponent of the undertaking had imagined. The inquiry covered the 171 years between 1700 and 1870 inclusive, and showed that during that period less than ten instances in which 'declaration of war' had been issued prior to hostilities had occurred, while in 107 cases war had begun without any formal warning.

The Channel Tunnel question was reopened repeatedly during my father's life, and on every occasion he opposed the scheme with the utmost energy. The last occasion before his death on which it was revived was in 1907, when it again became a subject of debate in Parliament. In 1883 four members of the Joint Committee of both Houses had presented a minority report in favour of the Channel Tunnel, in which certain of the statements in 'Hostilities without Declaration of War' were challenged. Among these four members were Lord Aberdare and Lord Lansdowne, who in 1907 was the leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords. My father was then at pains to persuade Lord Lansdowne to modify the opinion he expressed in 1883, and from his letters to Lord Lansdowne the following are extracts :

*' January 3, 1907.*

' I have only now obtained this copy of the pamphlet on "Hostilities without Declaration of War," which I was to send you. In its original form, this, as far as the list of cases is concerned, was laid before your Joint Committee in 1883, but the preface and list of authorities, as well as the index, were afterwards added.

' It is to the preface that I hope to draw your attention, My reason is this: You in your report swept away the whole of these cases in this paragraph :

'The Danish fleet was, it is true, seized without a declaration of war, a proceeding due to, and justified by, the discovery by the English Government of the secret article in the Treaty of Tilsit by which the navy of Denmark had been put at the disposal of France—an act which, it is needless to say, constituted an alliance with

our enemies, and which the Danish King and Government must have known to have been tantamount to a declaration of war, with all its consequences,' etc.

' Now, if you will be at the trouble of reading the preface, you will see that there is no basis whatever for this statement :\*

1. Denmark had concluded no such treaty.

2. She could not have done so if she had wished to do it, because the arrangement for the seizure of the Danish fleet was made personally by Napoleon and Alexander, and what they said to one another was secret between them, except as it was disclosed by acts, up, at least, to 1831.

3. The secret treaty bound Alexander and Napoleon to use force to compel Denmark and Portugal to yield their fleets.

4. Just before our fleet cut off all communication between Zealand and the mainland, Napoleon orders Bernadotte, as an excuse for future action, to reproach Denmark with a breach of neutrality against him in having allowed the Sound to remain open to our fleets.

5. Napoleon, in his secret correspondence, many days after our fleet had sailed, tells Talleyrand to warn the Danish Minister that he must choose war with England or war with him.

6. Canning, in the House, expressly repudiated the statement that he had ever charged Denmark with being in collusion with France.

7. The news of the secret treaty did not reach England till after the fleet had sailed.

8. If you will look at Yonge's ' Life of Lord Liverpool,' where I have cited it, you will be able to verify my quotation : ' The Ministers had never alleged or supposed that Denmark had concurred, or had been invited to concur, in the secret articles ; they merely affirmed what was patent to the meanest comprehension, that Denmark *was not strong enough* to refuse an invitation which was likely to be pressed on her,' etc.

' The statement about 1870 is equally unhistorical.'

' January 11, 1907.

' Thank you very much indeed for your most courteous answer. You will see, when you look at it again, that your

\* See ' Hostilities without Declaration of War,' Preface, pp. vi to x.



report accepted Lord Aberdare's casual reminiscences of the incidents of the beginning of the 1870 war between France and Germany, and his assumptions as to the facts of our seizure of the Danish fleet, without examining the date of or reading my report. That that was so is evident from the statement that I had undertaken to show that hostilities between European Powers have with rare exceptions commenced without previous declarations of war, whereas I had explained that I had simply examined the evidence under the impression that the sudden stroke was quite exceptional, but had been forced to the conclusion that it was normal, and that it was no mere formality that was omitted, but that Baron Brunnow's principle had been the rule, that "the blow must be struck before it is announced."\*

'This borderland between politics and war is one which is, as the case of your own Committee shows, quite out of the range of the studies of English statesmen, but is most familiar to all the statesmen with whom you have to deal on the Continent, every one of whom has been through the military mill. You necessarily make assumptions about the conditions of army life on which you determine your political action. They are familiar from personal experience with the conditions of army life, and take a different view from you. Which is likely to be right? I think the surprise at Port Arthur must have shown you that you cannot trust soldiers suddenly to discard the habits of peace time, in which they have lived for years, and to assume at once the vigilance which is the essential condition of safety in war, simply because at the end of long *pourparlers* an Ambassador has asked for his passports.

'Moreover, surely your own experience during the months

\* Baron Brunnow was the Russian Ambassador in 1840, when the Pasha of Egypt revolted from the Sultan and nearly brought Turkey to ruin. After putting forward his proposals, he stated that it was necessary 'to execute all these measures with the greatest promptitude and with the greatest secrecy. Promptitude, because it is the only means of insuring their success; secrecy, because the blow must first be struck before it is announced.'—'Annual Register,' 1840, p. 487.

preceding the Boer War must have shown you how difficult it is for any English Ministry to take precautions whilst our relations with a foreign Power are strained. Does not that experience suggest that it is precisely then that no precautions can be taken? Would you like to be responsible for the panic on the Stock Exchange which would follow an order to destroy the Channel Tunnel at a time when you knew the outbreak of war to be as close at hand as it was known to you to be just before the Boer War, whilst Campbell-Bannerman truly represented the current both of popular feeling and of the sentiment—I do not say the probable votes—of the majority in the House of Commons when he said that “he saw no reason for war or for preparation for war”?’

‘ January 22, 1907.

‘ You have not noticed the 1870 incident. . . . It was natural enough that you should take Lord Aberdare’s authority on this, seeing that he had been a member of the Cabinet in office when the facts occurred; but as a question whether there was then danger of surprise or not, whether there was “ample time to put all its defences into working order” for the Power assailed, it makes all the difference whether there were in fact, as Lord Aberdare fancied, “months of *pour-parlers*,” or whether, as Lord Granville said, two hours elapsed between a state of greater tranquillity than had been almost ever known and the act\* which lashed France into fury, and eight days between that act and war.† The point

\* The acceptance by Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern of the offer of the Spanish Crown.

† Lord Granville’s words were: ‘ I had the honour of receiving the seals of the Foreign Office last Wednesday. On the previous day I had an unofficial communication with the able and experienced Under-Secretary, Mr. Hammond, at the Foreign Office, and he told me, it being then three or four o’clock, that with the exception of the sad and painful subject about to be discussed this evening (the capture of Englishmen by Greek brigands) he had never during his long experience known such a great lull in foreign affairs, and that he was not aware of any important question that I should have to deal with. At six

that the Duc de Grammont treated the departure of Baron Werther from Paris as tantamount to a declaration of war would—seeing that Werther left on private business two days before the incident to which Lord Granville refers, the candidature of the Hohenzollern—show that, had there been such a prize as the Channel Tunnel to be secured, the Duc de Grammont would have felt justified in seizing it any time during the excitement in France. He would have had the same justification as the Japanese had for the attack on Port Arthur. But, after all, the real question is whether these cases gave a true warning or not as to the view of their rights in this matter likely to be taken by foreign Powers, and to that question Port Arthur is the answer. In the same way, our not having blown up the Laing's Nek tunnel repeats the incident of the Vosges tunnel in 1870.'

Lord Lansdowne did in fact change the opinion which he had held formerly, though in doing so he stated explicitly that he was not greatly impressed by the value of the historical precedents.\*

As soon as 'Hostilities without Declaration of War' was completed, Maurice was employed upon the history of the 1882 campaign; but before this was finished he was called once more to Egypt to take part in the expedition sent out to relieve Gordon. Before the expedition started he was engaged in what was called at the time 'the battle of the routes.' This was a controversy between the advocates of the desert route from Suakim to Berber and those who held that the Nile was the only avenue of approach to Khartoum for a considerable force. Maurice believed in the desert route so long as Berber was not in the Mahdi's hands, but he thought that the risks of relying upon com-

o'clock that evening, when we were about to begin the discussion of the Report of the Irish Land Bill, I received a telegram informing me of the choice which had been made, by the Provisional Government of Spain, of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern, and of his acceptance of the offer.' (*Cf.* Hansard, 3rd series, vol. 203, p. 3.)

\* See Hansard, 4th series, vol. 171, 1907.



munications across waterless country, when the Dervishes had the power of concentrating on the Nile to oppose the advance, were too great to be incurred.\* At the same time he was an earnest advocate of an early start, and expressed the opinion, before he left England, that the effect of delay had been to make it a matter of fortune, upon which it was not possible to calculate, whether the expedition arrived in time. He was appointed by Lord Wolseley Assistant-Quartermaster-General on the headquarters staff, but was actually employed throughout the Nile campaign on the line of communications. Lord Wolseley's chief anxiety was for the transport and feeding of his force, and he employed many of the men whom he most trusted to supervise these services. Maurice was successively Commandant at Wady-Halfa, Assiout, and Abou-Fatma. In the following letter he describes the latter station and his work there :

' I believe I am fated to remain here. They have been excessively civil to me about it—say that they cannot spare me from here because I have done my work so well and the rest of it, but the result is I am out of the run to Khartoum. However, my work has been very interesting. I have for the first time, instead of being on someone else's staff, had entirely independent command at a large station, with several staff officers under me, the opportunity for doing a good deal for the expedition in my own name and on my own judgment, and certainly I have been very cordially supported in all I have done. Your anxiety that I should get on with Lord Wolseley is very natural, but I do not at all regret the having an independent position, though I do regret not being in at the decisive part of the hunt.

I have been very fortunate in the officers serving under me. Major Hunter,† of the Egyptian army, is my proper staff officer, and an exceedingly nice fellow, a good officer, and a man of principle, who always tries to help me in every way. Captain Courteney, of the Engineers, who was by chance left

\* Cf. 'Official History of the Sudan Campaign,' Part I., p. 35.

† Now General Sir Archibald Hunter.

here without a job, fell to my service by Sir Evelyn Wood's asking me if I could find employment for him ; so I have set him to work on some of my camping arrangements, which have been varied. *Imprimis* I found a lot of ground that has had doura cut from it, and was threatening to become blowing sand, but with grass promising to come up through it. So I had about an acre and a half of it enclosed in a zareba of mimosa thorn, and had water turned on to it from the Nile, by means of a native water-wheel which works by dipping a series of buckets into the river and tilting them into a trough, from which the water is carried in mud channels over the ground which is to be irrigated. The wheel is turned by oxen driven by a small boy. The grass has now come up well, and we feed a flock of sheep upon it, greatly to the advantage of the mutton, which we kill for the troops of the station and those passing through. The sheep, which were formerly fed on doura grain in a closed store, fell off, but now they fatten. Then, as it is very difficult to get fresh vegetables as we want them from the natives, I sent to Cairo to Colonel Ardagh,\* and he sent me by post radish, lettuce, tomato, mustard and cress seeds. I had already got some melon seeds from Dongola. The melons are nice young plants, which I hope will fruit in time for the returning expedition, and the other vegetables we hope to begin eating in a few days. They will be invaluable in the hospital.

Our meat for issue was terribly tough, as there was a theory that it would not keep ; so I had a shed covered with mats, and we now find that it will keep for four, or even more days, the air being so dry that it is only necessary to keep off the direct heat of the sun. My butchery is not quite finished to my satisfaction, but when it is it will be as good as any London butcher could wish for—on a small scale. It is to have a floor of Nile mud, which, when dry and hardened, is as smooth and almost as hard as asphalt. Over that is a floor covered with tins from the sides of large biscuit boxes, and over

\* Afterwards Major-General Sir John Ardagh.

the tins, again, clean desert sand is sprinkled to prevent them from getting slippery. We get some splendid cattle as well as our sheep; and as I buy at about fourpence a pound I am saving the British tax-payer all the cost of transport from England, and always have enough to issue to troops passing through for as many days as they like to take. As I have to ration them from here to Debbah, a distance of about 170 miles, the more fresh meat I can get them to take, the less "bully-beef"—as the Australian tinned meat is popularly called—they have to have. Our greatest success, however, is with our bakery. General Earle, who was commanding the troops in front, being very eager to push forward as fast as he could, had before my arrival cleared out all the supplies here; and as I knew that Colonel Harrison,\* who had charge of the line of communications up to this place under Sir Evelyn Wood, had intended me to feed the troops for several days when they began to pass through, this was rather awkward. And actually at one time, when we were issuing biscuit at the rate of 700 pounds a day, I had only 1,500 pounds left. However, I bought locally some excellent wholemeal native flour of Egyptian wheat. I got some dough and porter, to start the bread, from Dongola, and I discovered among my issuers—*i.e.*, the men who issue the rations—a man who was a baker by trade. He turned out a first-rate man, made us ovens of Nile mud, lined with tin from the biscuit boxes, and we were able by the time that the troops began to come through in numbers to turn out 1,200 pounds a day. Major Hunter has carried out all the payments of natives and general accounts, and done all sorts of other work, so that I have had the luxury of being quite free for general superintendence; and, though this station is bigger, my work is really much lighter than it was at Assiout, where I was practically single-handed and hardly had a moment to myself.

'Of course there is a great deal to be done in the way of general sanitary regulation for a place through which the whole army passes in succession, the land parties for the most

\* Now General Sir Richard Harrison.



part not having taken in rations since Sarras, and the water parties since Dah. We have a large camp for the land parties on the desert side of a small range of sandy hillocks which runs about 200 yards from the river bank. Our own camp is just on the lee-side of this ridge; then come my grassland and vegetable crops, and next a foreshore encampment which we keep for the whalers and the water parties. I have a large hospital here for any sick who are sent back from the front or for those who get knocked up in the boats coming up. We have accommodation for eighty patients in huts and tents. I had the pleasure of having Major Turner\* here for a short time. Like the good fellow he is, though he is senior to me in the regiment, he came most willingly to work under my orders, and did me an excellent service before things were in as smooth order as they are now. At his suggestion I wired to the principal representative of the National Aid Society, and they have sent me newspapers and stationery for all the sick, which have been most welcome. I have had a little box made for each patient, so cut as to serve as tray and table; it has two partitions, which can be covered over with tin to keep the food clean and hot; we employ the convalescents in cutting the tins out of the biscuit boxes. As the patients have native bedsteads of four posts and cross palm-ropes, which are very comfortable, they are not much to be pitied as to their accommodation. Their huts are made of doura stalk and Nile mud, and they have separate kitchen accommodation. It is a wonderful contrast to what it was in '82. We get milk, eggs, and poultry, in large quantities for them every day, so that with the help of my vegetables we have been able to set up a regular dieted hospital, as it is called. You would be amused at the number of notice-boards we have in all directions: "Do not cross the fences," "Keep off the grass," "No washing to be done above this point," "No refuse to be thrown into the Nile," "Drinking water to be drawn here," and dozens more.

\* Now Major-General Sir Alfred Turner.

‘ Then we are having all the *voyageurs*\* of the expedition collected here gradually for purposes of re-engagement. I have them in a camp at the foot of the cataract, where they meet all boats as they arrive, and guide them up. I have also under my orders the Black or Soudanese Battalion of the Egyptian army. I only keep thirty of them here to furnish guards ; the remainder are at the foot of the cataract in what is, I think, the prettiest camp on the Nile. They are under a beautiful grove of palm-trees looking over a fine stretch of the Nile broken by highly-cultivated and well-wooded islands. The broken water at the foot of the cataract ripples and dashes between the islands and the opposite shore, where, beyond a foreground of green bank and feathery palm-trees, there is a distance of desert mountains.’

On coming home, Maurice was awarded the brevet of Colonel. The Nile campaign was the last active service which fell to his lot. He was not destined for command in the field, and his career as a fighting soldier had nothing to distinguish it from that of many of his contemporaries who were engaged constantly in the small wars of the Victorian era. He was, however, able to prove that, contrary to the popular belief of the time, it was possible to be at once a deep student of war and a sound practical soldier in the field. Twelve years later, when Maurice was commanding at Woolwich, Lord Wolseley, then Commander-in-Chief, in addressing the cadets at his annual inspection of the Royal Military Academy, said of him : ‘ In advising you to study if you wish to advance in your profession, I do not wish you to become bookworms. General Maurice, who is here to-day, is a fine example to you of the combination of study and practice. He is not only the ablest student of war we have, but is also the bravest man I have ever seen under fire.’ Wolseley also wrote of him : ‘ It is often said that dull soldiers make the best fighters, because they do not think of danger. Now,

\* These men were brought from Canada to assist in working the boats through the cataracts.

Maurice is one of the very few men I know who, if I told him to run his head against a stone wall, would do so without question. His is also the quickest and keenest intellect I have met in my service.'

The remainder of Maurice's work was to be done henceforth chiefly with the pen, and it is by his studies of war that he is known. But there is no doubt, amongst those who knew him intimately, that he much preferred an active life, and was never so happy as when in the field.

Early in 1886 he went back to the Intelligence Department to complete the history of the 1882 campaign, which was published at the beginning of 1887. This book involved him in a number of controversies, to which, as they were all settled satisfactorily to himself in his lifetime, it is unnecessary to refer further than to say that he thoroughly enjoyed crossing swords with a worthy opponent. He threw himself into a literary argument with tremendous zest, and often amazed his adversary by the fierceness of the language with which he would attack what appeared to him a specious case. It very rarely happened, however, that these combats involved any personal antipathy, almost the only instances of this being when he considered that his father's meaning and opinions had been wilfully perverted. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than to pick an opponent up from the débris of a demolished argument, to ask him to dinner and discuss the battle till the small-hours of the morning.

The methods he followed in writing the history of the 1882 campaign are typical of most of his military work. He felt strongly that no real progress was possible in an army such as ours unless it had behind it the driving power of public opinion. His writings were therefore addressed rather to his fellow-countrymen than to his brother officers. His main object was to be 'understood of the people.' Writing of the history, he says :

'I happened in this instance to have something to say which I wanted to reach the ears of English men and women,



not only of soldiers. I wanted it, not for my own personal behoof, but because I thought it important on national grounds that average Englishmen should understand certain facts on which they themselves exercise potent influences. It has been my business to study closely the course of many expeditions of late years, and I believe that the fate of the next expedition which leaves the shores of England may be most seriously affected by my success or failure in bringing home to the great body of our people the experiences of the 1882 campaign.

‘ The duties of an official historian writing for a country under a constitutional and Parliamentary government like that of England are not the same as those of a German historian.

‘ The general of every army in the field, no matter to what country he belongs, has of necessity to employ as a part of his art what are ordinarily known as *ruses de guerre*. The very essence of these is that the operations which he undertakes shall be of a deceptive character. Now, in our days you cannot impose upon an enemy without leaving a false impression of your intentions on your friends. For a German general, acting under the immediate orders of his Emperor himself present in the field, such delicate work is at least unhampered by any other considerations than those of warlike expediency. How different is the case of an English general! Every skilfully-planned attempt to “keep his enemy alarmed” without unnecessarily exposing his own troops leads immediately to reports sent, not only home, but to every capital in Europe, of the “futile enterprises” he has undertaken. Such comments are at once discounted at their proper value by the experienced soldiers of Europe, whether in Paris, Vienna, or Berlin. But at home that English public, which, as Sir Arthur Wellesley long since said of it, never forms “an accurate estimate of the difficulties attending any military enterprise which they undertake,” is invariably and always imposed upon. Distrust spreads throughout the country. The House of Commons as a body

is affected by it. Ministers begin to feel the pressure. The general at the very moment that he most needs support begins to find it fail him.

'The *amour-propre* of Englishmen in such circumstances becomes a political matter of the very highest importance. It affects elections and divisions; it affects the action of Cabinets. Unless, when the victorious result of those *ruses de guerre* which have offended English *amour-propre* is patent to all men, Englishmen will bear to be reminded of the view they took of those skilful manœuvres when they were in course of execution, there is no hope of their profiting by that great teacher which in its highest phase is truly said to be "philosophy teaching by example." History must sometimes "stoop to conquer."

'I had always determined that, if it ever fell to my lot to have the opportunity, I would imbed in the actual history of a campaign a warning which might help to save our armies from the terrible dangers which have threatened each expedition which, within the period of my historical knowledge, has left the shores of England. But an official historian is not his own master. He cannot write in an official history just what he pleases. I was therefore in no small doubt as to whether those very passages which I regarded as the most vital, the most important, the most earnest, the most serious, which I had penned, would pass the gauntlet of official criticism. I had this rather curious and interesting experience. The passages did not escape criticism. They were criticized almost invariably by any men who read them in proof who had never been behind the scenes, by the men who had never either commanded an army in the field or been employed on the headquarter staff of a general who had so commanded, or had never known from within the War Office what has taken place during each expedition. But I was well able to endure this criticism, for I found invariably that just in proportion as my readers and critics had had the experience I speak of they approved and applauded what I had said on this matter.'

## IV

The Staff College—'The Balance of Military Power in Europe'—*The United Service Magazine.*

THE publication of the history of the 1882 campaign was delayed for more than a year by disagreements amongst some of the chief actors as to points of fact, but at the end of 1885 Maurice's work on it was so far forward that he was free to take up the appointment of 'Professor of Military Art and History' at the Staff College, which was then offered him. He went to Camberley with some reluctance, for the Staff College had not then won the position it now holds, and he felt that the title of Professor\* would be dangerous to one who aspired above everything to an active career as a soldier, and was already known for his writings on the theory of war.

He received, however, a definite assurance that the appointment would be no bar to his employment on active service, should the occasion arise, and he accepted it on this condition.

He has left on record his views on the teaching of military history in general, and at the Staff College in particular :

'It must be emphatically asserted that there does not exist, never has existed, and never, except by pedants, of whom the most careful students of war are more impatient than other soldiers, has there ever been supposed to exist, "an art of war" which was something other than the resultant of accumulated military experience. Those who have most assisted in making the study sufficiently methodic

\* This title has since been abolished, much for the reason which made my father object to it.



to enable it to be of practical profit in their own profession to soldiers for future use, or to historical students in watching the play of mind between great commanders, have been invariably the most emphatic in denouncing all attempts to formulate a systematic series of "rules of war." On the other hand, it is not from writers on war, but from the greatest generals, that the most emphatic statements have come as to the paramount importance to a soldier of the careful study of past campaigns. The classical instance of the most authoritative dictum on this subject is surrounded by circumstances of dramatic interest. Napoleon in 1813, sitting after dinner among his Marshals, between the first and second battle of Dresden, was drawn to speak on this subject by Marmont, the one who, in Napoleon's own judgment and that of others, had himself the most complete knowledge of war as an art. Marmont, observing how difficult it was, during the continued strain of war itself, to improve in its practice, maintaining that rather in peace than in war could war be best studied, said to Napoleon that he thought that Napoleon's own first campaign in Italy was the most brilliant in conception of any he had ever fought; so that sixteen years of high command had hardly made his knowledge of war as an art more perfect. Napoleon at once admitted the truth of this, and in reply said: "Yes, Turenne was the only one of us all who constantly improved in the management of his campaigns as he advanced in years." This reply is especially remarkable, because Napoleon was not only the greatest captain of his own age, but he was by far the most careful student that the world has known of the great generals of all ages. It is an unanswerable assertion that only by study of the past experience of war has any great soldier ever prepared himself for commanding armies.

' There is something almost comic in the attitude of mind in regard to this subject of half the English soldiers and more than half the civilians one meets. If a distinguished soldier, like Sir Redvers Buller, goes down to Aldershot and

describes certain war experiences of his own, they are delighted, interested, and absorbed, by what he tells them. They declare at once that these are "worth all the theory in the world!" Now, what I want to ask such men is, "Would those experiences of Sir Redvers Buller have lost their value if they had been recorded in a printed book? Because, if not, this horrible thing you call 'theory' is simply the same thing which so much interests you in the other shape."

'In all professional study it is essential for a soldier at all events to keep before him the fact that the object is not merely to "acquire information concerning operations, battles, skirmishes, and charges, or, indeed, any mere information at all,"\* but to improve his judgment as to what ought to be done under the varied conditions of actual war; "knowledge being only of practical value in so far as it acquaints us with what we have to expect in war, and in so far as this acquaintance makes it easier for us to act in war."\* And to this end, in the study of military history, it is necessary in each separate case first to ascertain accurately what the facts really are; secondly, to endeavour to ascertain what the causes were that led to the facts; and, thirdly, to endeavour to draw sound conclusions for the future from the sequence of facts upon the causes.

'When first I came to the Staff College, I found that there had somehow or other been established an idea of military history which was certainly very different from any that I had ever formed of it, and from the view of it which was held by the very able men who had been those from whom I had myself learnt most in the past. I can hardly describe it better than by citing a fact which became known to me. A zealous student had actually elaborated a *memoria technica* which enabled him, for the purpose of an examination, to place the troops in full detail just as they were on every day of any importance, at all events, in the campaign

\* These quotations are from 'Ueber Kriegsgeschichtliche Studien als Mittel zur Förderung der Kriegstüchtigkeit des Offiziers,' by Colonel Gizycki.

which he was studying. I believe that the nature of the examination enabled him to take a very high place. It seems to me that he might have done all this, and yet his work might have been absolutely useless to him as a soldier.

'I very much reduced the time which had previously been given to the study of campaigns from a strategical point of view. It does not seem to me possible at the Staff College to do more in that matter than to introduce men to a method of studying campaigns which may be useful to them in any reading they do for themselves. In fact, I have followed with regard to military history, with such modifications as the special subject required, a principle which is laid down by Arnold in his lectures on modern history. He very forcibly urges that a man is likely to acquire a much better knowledge of general history by the close and intimate study of one particular section of it, as a preliminary to all his reading, than he is likely to acquire by merely covering a very large amount of ground. In particular, that mode of studying military history which consists in reading a number of rapid sketches of the larger movements of a great number of Napoleon's campaigns seems to me, if it is taken by itself, to be particularly likely to lead up to the result which is recorded traditionally of some officer who had, in years gone by, passed through the senior department,\* and announced, when he had some specific duty assigned to him, that he had not learnt to move bodies of less than 100,000 men. I have always looked upon the mere learning off of the movements of armies in the history of the past as of very little interest or value, except in so far as it supplies examples which may be useful for lessons in the future. Incidentally, however, as a staff officer has very often to examine a considerable variety of often conflicting evidence, and either to draw up a report or to form his own conclusions as to the truth of the facts, it has seemed to me that

\* *I.e.*, the senior department of the Royal Military College, established in 1801 for the education of officers for staff employment. It became in 1858 'the Staff College.'



the study of military history offers considerable opportunities for giving training in this work, apart from its value as an actual study of what is likely to happen in future war.'

Maurice's already extensive knowledge of military history relieved him from the necessity of devoting himself wholly to the preparation of his lectures, and after the first few months he was able to give more time to reading and to literary work while he was at the Staff College than at any other period of his service. His interests were by no means confined to military affairs. He edited for a lady cousin, who lived in Donegal, a series of letters descriptive of life in that county during the time of agitation which followed the introduction of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule proposals. His years of service in Ireland, during which he had more than once come to the assistance of boycotted landlords, and been in personal conflict with Fenian mobs, had left him an ardent supporter of the Union. Indeed, this was the one political question, other than those immediately connected with problems of Imperial Defence, on which he took any active part.

The following letter, written in November, 1886, to Dr. Plumptre with reference to a criticism Maurice had made to some of the notes in the Dean's translation of the 'Divina Commedia,' shows another aspect of his mind :

'What I did not like in some of the notes was what seemed to me, and I feared might seem to others, a sort of acceptance of the worship of the Middle Ages as the highest revelation of the Unnameable that we of the nineteenth century have known. Perhaps I may say, to explain my meaning, that my two sojourns in Egypt have impressed on my mind, with an intensity the strength of which I can hardly convey to you, the enormous effect produced on the mind and morals of a people by the *spirit* that they worship. Egypt worships the man in the clouds with a stick—naked power divorced from all idea of right—and accordingly her people cringe to wicked power. The Middle Age worship seems to me to

have been a worship of almost absolutely selfish power, capable of any atrocity in vindication of its own authority. In Dante's genius this is tinged with a burning sense of righteous indignation against wrong—no doubt it was so in all the nobler minds—but the balance of indignation is always thrown, not against the foes of righteousness, but against the enemies of the All-Powerful. Judas's condemnation is not that he came in contact with the Perfect Holiness, and for greed betrayed it, but that he happened to offend the Son of the Great Potentate, and so he is duly tortured after the fashion of a traitor who has destroyed a less potent person upon earth.

'I, not without speaking from some military experience, hold it to be a flat and blundering lie that common men are terrorized into doing their duty; and when I find that in practical life, as in these supposedly high theologies, the answer is always the same—"That is all very well with you and me and a few select people"—it seems to me that the starting-point of "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted," "Judge not, that ye be not judged" is utterly forgotten. Whenever it is assumed that the superior person is to ignore what influences himself, and to think only of the extortioners, unjust, adulterers, and what would influence them, it seems to me clean certain that the whole thing is, stock, lock, and barrel, antichristian. Anything based on the assumption that we may in some circumstances treat Christ's words as though they had no importance and no value, to my thinking, strikes at the root of all sound study of the influences that tend to produce truth and morality.'

Maurice bought a house about a mile and a half from the Staff College, on the Frimley Ridges, and being, as his letters from Ashantee and the Nile have shown, both a lover of Nature and a keen gardener, he spent much of his spare time in laying out the grounds.

While he was at the Staff College the late Colonel G. F. Henderson was an instructor at the Royal Military College

close by. A very appreciative notice written by Maurice of 'The Campaign of Fredericksburg,' which Henderson had published anonymously a few years before, first brought the two men together. Maurice sent the book to Lord Wolseley, who was especially anxious to encourage military studies of that nature, rare enough in those days, and thereafter watched the writer's career with interest. Henderson was a frequent visitor at my father's house. I well remember as a Sandhurst cadet listening to the two men discussing Lee's strategy in 1862. The talk, begun after tea, did not end until well after midnight; as I showed Henderson out, he said to me, "How splendidly keen your father is!" Certainly, keenness in everything he took up, whether in work or play, was one of Maurice's characteristics. He began to cycle when he was nearing his sixtieth birthday, and could not be induced to give it up until illness prevented him from leaving his bed. When he was in command at Woolwich the revival of croquet took place. The tactics of the game appealed to him strongly, and an anxious butler, who wished to get him in to dress for dinner, would often find him finishing a match in the dark with cycle lamps placed on hoops and object ball.

When Maurice's appointment at the Staff College expired, it was mainly on his urgent representations that Lord Wolseley was induced to persuade the sticklers for precedent, who considered Henderson too junior, to nominate the latter to the vacant post. With Sir Henry Hildyard as Commandant, Henderson in the Chair of Military History, and Lord Wolseley as Commander-in-Chief, supporting and encouraging both, a new era for which Maurice had struggled with but moderate success dawned at the Staff College. He wrote to Henderson soon after the latter had taken up his new post:

'I am deeply conscious that at present the Staff College produces a monstrous deal of bread for very little sack. The able men, who would in any case make good staff officers,



benefit greatly, so do those who have strong character or practical experience of war to guide them ; but from the ruck we have turned out, I fear me, some cranks and not a few pedants. I am sure that under the new régime you will succeed where I have often failed.'

The literary work which Maurice undertook at the Staff College was chiefly devoted to supporting the army reformers, who, with Lord Wolseley at their head, were endeavouring to form an expeditionary force with a permanent organization and complete equipment for war. The modest goal at which these men were then aiming was the creation of a force of two army corps and a cavalry division, or about 70,000 men in all. The opponents of this proposal were divided roughly into three main groups, consisting—

1. Of those who were opposed to armed intervention on our part on the Continent of Europe in any form and in any circumstances.

2. Of those who believed that, in the presence of the Continental nations in arms, effective intervention by our small army was impossible.

3. Of those who believed that our main efforts should be concentrated in reinforcing the garrisons of our overseas possessions, more especially of India.

In 1888 Maurice published his 'Balance of Military Power in Europe.' In this he shows—First, that it is in our interest to support the opponents of our most probable and most formidable enemy (at the time he wrote this most formidable enemy was Russia) ; secondly, that our amphibious strength confers on us a power of intervening on the Continent, which cannot be measured in terms of the number of soldiers which we may be able to put into the field ; thirdly, that in every instance in modern times in which it would have been in our interests to intervene we could have done so effectively with a field army of 70,000 men ; lastly, that our best means of defending India is to act where our amphibious strength can be exerted most effectually.

He felt himself that the subject should have been handled in the first instance by a sailor, but none had then attempted it. He wrote some years before Mahan had opened our eyes to the true meaning of our naval history. The book was one of his most successful, and had a wide circulation on the Continent. General Swaine, then our Military Attaché at Berlin, wrote that Bismarck had read it with interest, and that it was one of the very few English military works to be found on the shelves of German officers. For years it was the only work of its kind that appeared in the Tauchnitz edition. It contains an interesting piece of military prophecy. Writing sixteen years before the Russo-Japanese War, Maurice said :

‘ My purpose has been to show that Russia, from the enormous masses of her population, and from the extent to which she devotes all her resources to preparation for war, must always be a great military Power, but that she has not gained, but lost very heavily indeed, by the changed conditions of modern warfare. That, till she has again to fight with a Great Power, it will be impossible absolutely to estimate her military strength. But that, though she has been actively engaged since 1887 in perfecting her military organization, yet the weaknesses which she showed in the Turkish War were due, not merely to temporary defects, but to conditions inherent in the nature of her people and her government.’

To a correspondent who wrote to him with reference to the book, and made some suggestions as to how Russia’s progress towards India might be checked without intervention on our part on the Continent, he wrote in October, 1888 :

‘ I may say briefly that to allow the Black Sea to become a Russian lake, even though we could keep the Russians confined within it, would be to abandon the opportunity we at present possess of striking Russia counterblows which would prevent her from troubling us in Asia. The great

advantage which I have claimed for a nation possessed of "amphibious strength" is the multiplication of force produced by the uncertainty of blows directed against north, south, or east, at pleasure. A danger for Russia which would oblige her to keep forces adequate to protect all threatened points from our movable power. Secondly, to abandon Constantinople to Russia means the abandonment of the Sea of Marmora as well. In order to keep Russia confined within the Black Sea, we should have to trust to a blockade of Besika Bay, and the recent naval manœuvres\* have most accurately illustrated the difficulties which at present lie in the way of successful blockade under modern conditions. A few cruisers getting out would destroy our Mediterranean commerce, and we could not keep them in. Constantinople in friendly hands closes them in completely. We further immediately sacrifice the enormous power of the Turkish army, which, officered and equipped by us, would supply us with just what we lack—private soldiers in great numbers and of excellent quality.

‘Further, from the larger point of view of European interests, which greatly concerns us, Russia at Constantinople means Roumania, Bulgaria, and Greece, all rising nations of great promise, crushed under her heel. It means increased power to the principle of despotism, and liberty crushed. Similarly it means a future of possible similar nations in Armenia and Asia Minor discounted for a certain present relief from the bad rule of the Pashas.

‘Next as to your calculation of the advantages to us of letting Germany and Austria crush Russia for us at their cost, not ours. That was just the cunning calculation which Prussia made whilst Napoleon was destroying Austria and breaking the power of Russia in Europe. I have specially pointed that out in my book. The result in that case was national ruin to Prussia. The analogy is so close that you may follow it easily. If we, by leaving the central Powers too weak, allow them to be crushed, we shall, in all reason,

\* Of 1888.



have ourselves alone to deal with Russia and France, supported by the bitter feeling of all Europe against our selfishness. But, on the other hand, it is extremely likely that Russia will prefer to relieve the desire of her people for excitement by taking the easiest course ; that is, finding that England stands alone, she will think it easier to deal with her than with Germany, Austria, and Italy, combined. What help or sympathy can we then hope for from the Powers which we have refused to aid, those which would have been ready to aid us if we would have enabled them to keep the peace in Europe whilst they kept it for us in Asia ? In any case the policy you appear to favour contemplates one at least, and possibly two, of the most appalling wars that have ever devastated mankind. That which I recommend means peace both in Europe and in Asia.'

Long before the question of amphibious power had been studied generally even by soldiers and sailors, he regarded it as the key, not only to our strategical problems, but to our military organization. A friend wrote to him at this time advocating a short-service army for home defence, and a long-service army for overseas garrisons, on the grounds of greater efficiency and economy. To him Maurice replied :

' You say, " Our decisive *point* is surely the sea ? " Don't you see that in using the word " point " you beg the whole argument ? A point is that which has no parts and no magnitude. The sea has a magnitude of more than twenty-four million square miles. Now, my whole contention is that the fact that you have to provide for the watching of this enormous area, besides nine millions at least of square miles on land, *alters the whole conditions of the problem.*

' You treat the navy as a separate question from the army, and you say you must have a navy ; and then, having got rid of that inconvenient fact, you proceed to discuss the question as if, as far as the army is concerned, the English Empire were a continent, or as if the defence of these islands constitute the defence of the Empire. I say in doing so you

ignore the *whole* army problem. The army at home at present consists of the force necessary to relieve that in India, and the force necessary to relieve the 35,000 men in Egypt, Gibraltar, Malta, the Cape, Ceylon, Mauritius, Hong-Kong, Halifax, Nova Scotia, the Bermudas, the West Indian Islands, etc. At present the army distribution is absolutely based on the two principles of having at each of these points enough Imperial soldiers to serve as a nucleus for the local forces, and to be sufficient, with an overwhelmingly strong navy, to hold them.

‘ Now, I say that, leaving for a moment the question of India on one side, each of your arguments and proposals is enormously affected by these conditions, and that in the nature of things it is inevitable that your proposals, if ever practically carried out, should lead to a hopeless breakdown while you ignore them.

‘ Let me take your causes of expense in order :

‘ 1. “ The seven-years system and five years reserve, for which you wish to substitute three years and nine.” The answer is easy. We did try the three-years system. Wolseley was almost fanatical for it. It absolutely broke down because of the necessity of the foreign reliefs. The men’s time was completely broken up into snippets, between service at home, the passages out and home, and the available remainder at the foreign station. For the guards, *because they do not go abroad*, we have the three-years system, which will show you why, unless you abandon the Empire, your scheme must break down. It would entail enormous and useless additional cost.\*

‘ But you say we could create a local colonial army enlisted *ad hoc*. Again I say we tried it, and it failed. One regiment was left twelve years in Natal at one time ; at the end of that period the mass of the men had become engaged in local colonial work as landowners, farmers, etc., and as a fighting force they had lost all their value. *A fortiori* that

\* The three-years system was tried again fourteen years after this letter was written, and broke down again for the reasons here given.

would be the case with a permanent local force of long-service men.

‘ 2. Your second point is “ the great proportionate cost of staffs in a small army.”

‘ Again I say that always where there is a complete separate body, acting independently, the cost must be greater than with that same number acting as part of a larger body. An army of the size of a *corps d’armée* must cost more than a *corps d’armée* in an army. All the establishments necessary to render it self-supporting are required for the small body as much as for the large. Now, with an Empire scattered over the world you must have establishments at each point, distant hundreds, and often thousands, of miles, enabling each small body to act independently. Moreover, the home establishments which have to deal with these numerous self-standing bodies must be larger. Though the garrison of Gibraltar is only some 5,000 men, the questions with which the Military Governor has to deal are constantly of international importance. You cannot for a moment compare the duties thrown on this staff with those of a 30,000 German corps, or even of a very much larger force. The duties of the Gibraltar staff are incomparably more difficult and important. So of Malta, so of Hong-Kong etc.

‘ Next, the actual business with which our staff has to deal is greatly increased by the continual necessities for relief and exchange with these out-stations. Yet further, I put the Empire as one of three causes of expense, the others being our liberties and our wealth. Both of these at present affect the cost of our staff. I don’t think I am wrong in saying that by far the greater part of the cost of labour, clerical and other, with which our staffs have to deal, are not required of the German staff at all. They are necessitated by questions in the House of Commons. The majority of returns are kept up in order that the Secretary of State may have at his command materials for reply to questions in the House. The whole most costly and elaborate system of checks



and counter-checks on expenditure is solely due to the necessities of Parliamentary rule.

' Again, there is no single cause of waste greater than the necessity, which would be the scoff and byword of any business company, for expending in each year just as much and no more than is voted in it. I could tell you stories by the dozen of the ludicrous expense and waste which this entails.

' As to the effect of our wealth, after all, the question of what you have to pay a given man is the question of the inducement you can offer him to prefer your service to that of someone else. In Germany these inducements are overwhelming. As regards honour and social position there is no competition. In England the competition of outside wealthy businesses is such that, as Buller said to me the other day, " the staff officers we want have left the army."

' Armstrong, Nordenfeldt, Whitworth, the educational establishments, etc., not to mention the number of private businesses in which many men in the army have some interest, are continuously drawing off those who have any special aptitude in outside directions. Though the pay of a German general is nominally lower than that of an English one, the position of the German general is adequately kept up on his pay ; whereas for almost all the appointments in our army out of India an indispensable qualification is an independent income.

' 3. As to the men, after many years' trial in the recruiting department, we find that we cannot get men at the age at which the Germans get them. The Germans take them at the age at which they want them. We have to take them at the age at which they will come. Accordingly we have to enlist boys, and therefore your beautiful three-years system would leave us with boys and no men. Again, in all the questions of distribution and movement of the army at home, as well as in many other matters, it is necessary to consider what will attract men.

' 4. You say, " We are a rich country, and extravagant in

detail." With some of the effects of the wealth of the country I have already dealt. The extravagance in detail in the sense that we provide our men with things other people do not is partly due to our wealth, partly to our liberties, and partly to voluntary service—partly, also, to the necessities of a vast Empire.

' 5. You speak of the want of pecuniary authority in the regimental officer. Certainly what you mean under this head is a great cause of cost. No system can be more expensive than to treat your servants as if they of course wanted to waste your money, because the result is they want to spend all they can get, and you cannot stop the waste. This is again in a great measure due to Parliamentary control, and as compared with Germany I doubt if it is not the inevitable difference between a Parliamentary and a military aristocratic and autocratic system. You will find pretty nearly the same waste in this respect in France.

' That is the end of your headings. I think I have shown that the question of the thousands of miles enters into most of them.

' As to our having more officers apart from the staff, to which I have already alluded, you know as well as I do that if the Germans could get more regimental officers they would take them gladly, and that tactically we have not one too many—not enough, I think, for modern conditions.

' I think I have pretty well dealt with the objections to your proposals except as regards India. My answer is here again that we tried your system, and it failed us absolutely. The old India Company's white army in India was enormously costly, and gradually lost touch both of England and of discipline. A long-service army would do so again.

' To sum up, I have shown, first, that every one of your proposals has been tried and has failed; secondly, you do not even attempt to take into account the defence of the Empire, but only of these islands; thirdly, you treat navy and army as two entirely disconnected bodies, whereas the whole safety of our Empire depends upon whole-hearted co-operation

between our navy and our army. The most destructive thing we can do is to keep on trying schemes that do not take into account the inexorable physical conditions of our Empire.

‘ Lastly, you will not get the men you want for your scheme, because, according to the belief of those who have been studying the question for years, the numbers you want are not in the country. You will throw away the advantages we possess in having Yeomanry, Militia, and Volunteers, all of such value that no Government that can get them on the terms on which we get them would throw them away. Once thrown away, you would never get them together again. I believe we are steadily going forward on the path of improvement. I believe your revolutionary scheme would land us in impotence, and make all men who care for this country despair of it.’

In his attempts to explain to his fellow-countrymen what he believed to be the true principles of Imperial defence, Maurice felt strongly the need of a journal of the highest class devoted mainly, if not solely, to this purpose. He began to cast about for some means of establishing a magazine of the kind he wanted, and his efforts in this direction received the warmest encouragement from Lord Wolseley. The following letter, written in December, 1889, to Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby, explains his ideas :

‘ I have been thinking over your letter to me in which you spoke of the need of being able to convey to the navy such information as an explanation of the strategy and tactics of the rival Admirals during the last naval manœuvres. We in the army are in the same predicament. Oddly enough, just at this moment it has been settled at the Intelligence Department that they are going to abandon the practice of publishing any of the books, such as “ The Armed Strength of Foreign Nations,” which they have hitherto issued. Now, during the time that I was in the Intelligence Department we were all agreed that there were two functions of an



Intelligence Department, each almost equally necessary—one, to collect and keep absolutely secret information which ought to be only at the service of the Government or of a general in the field ; the other, to publish as widely as possible such information as ought to be known to the army. They are abandoning the latter function for two reasons—first, that they find it exceedingly difficult to separate from some of the books which they have been issuing information that ought to be kept secret ; next, that the sale of those books that they have published is so ridiculously small as to make it not worth while to incur the expense.

‘ The result is that we shall be left without any means of diffusing military knowledge into the army at the very time when the army is waking up to appreciate its value, when a reading public has been to a great extent created, and when it is of vital consequence for efficiency that knowledge should be spread. I have been wondering whether it would not be possible to do something ourselves to get over the difficulties of both services. I have ascertained this much : One of the most successful of modern journalists and magazine managers has told me that if it was possible to get the very best men to contribute to such a scheme it would be a certain success for him to purchase what was necessary, to pay at the highest literary rates for all contributions, and to insure it the widest publicity.

‘ The value of the *Revue Militaire des Armées Étrangères* in France and to Europe is so great that I cannot help thinking we might put it forward as a model of what might be done. It is published under the sanction of the Minister of War, and nothing of military interest in Europe takes place without being noticed in its columns.

‘ I find that the man I speak of thinks that it would be better not to start a new periodical, but to buy up an old one, which just now he can easily do. The question is, Do you consider that the great difficulty which stands in the way of the Admiralty is the chronic difficulty of finance, or do you think that the dread of printed matter, which comes

down as a tradition from the days of the scurrilous and base old newspapers, hangs about the Admiralty as much as it certainly hangs about H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge?

'It seems to me that if we could offer to get over for them the financial difficulties, and could get signed articles by known men of the highest class, while banishing the silly grumbles which disfigure the present military press, those who wish for the efficiency of the navy and the army ought to be ready to help us to put information within the reach of the services, and that we might offer both Admiralty and War Office to publish for them such information as they wish to communicate generally. If you think this possible on your side of the question, I should feel more hope of approaching the Duke on the same lines. Lord Wolseley, I need not say, would be delighted if the Duke could be won over.'

The negotiations to which he refers resulted in the purchase of the *United Service Magazine*, which was restarted in 1890 in a new series.

Maurice collected a band of contributors, which included, amongst others, Rudyard Kipling, the Duke of Argyll, Lord Wolseley, Sir Evelyn Wood, Lord Charles Beresford, Swinburne, Sir Geoffrey Hornby, Sir Charles Dilke, and Professor Spenser Wilkinson. His own most important contributions for the first volumes were a series of articles on the Waterloo campaign. They were the outcome of his taking me to see a panorama of the Battle of Waterloo in Westminster in 1890. I remember that he was equally astonished at seeing the large number of visitors who appeared to take the keenest interest in the events of the battle, and the fairy-tale told by the official guide. He did not mean the articles to be more than the correct story of the campaign told in a popular form, but his long study and research had made him a master of the subject, and the papers contained so much original thought that they attracted far wider notice than he had anticipated. They have been freely used by Ropes, Hous-saye, and other modern historians of the campaign.

In the last of the articles he discusses the question of whether the Duke rode to Wavre to meet Blücher before Waterloo. To the end he believed this to be probable, and he succeeded in bringing together much fresh evidence on the point, but he was never able to convince himself absolutely, and always intended to return to the matter. Unfortunately, he never had sufficient leisure to complete his investigations.

The magazine at once fulfilled the purposes for which Maurice designed it. Owing, however, to a misunderstanding in the preliminary negotiations, he found himself saddled with the entire responsibility for its financial and business management, as well as for the general supervision of the literary side, to which he had intended to devote himself. With no business experience and little time to give to management, he was unable to make the enterprise a financial success, and some years later was compelled to dispose of it at a heavy loss.

Maurice's reputation at the Staff College caused him to be in much request as a lecturer at the Royal United Service Institution and at the various military societies throughout the country. Two of the papers which are included in this volume date from this period.

The last work he published before leaving the Staff College was 'War,' which appeared in 1891. This book, the greater part of which appeared in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' is one of the best known of his purely military works. It is mainly an explanation in a more popular form of the principles he had advocated in the 'Wellington Prize Essay.' In the same year he received the Companionship of the Bath, and in November, 1892, he left the Staff College to take command of an artillery brigade at Aldershot. After eighteen months' duty at that station he was appointed to the command of the artillery of the Eastern District, with headquarters at Colchester.



## V

## Woolwich—'National Defences'—The Cyclists.

MAURICE was not long at Colchester, for in the autumn of 1895 he was promoted Major-General and given the command at Woolwich. While he was at the former place he had his first opportunity of appearing as a critic of contemporary war, a rôle in which he was to gain distinction during his last years of active work. In 1894, during the Chino-Japanese War, Maurice contributed to the *United Service Magazine* a monthly review of the operations. Long and careful study of military history had produced the result which he had always claimed it would have. His military judgment had been so ripened that he had acquired the faculty of forecasting the probable course of events from meagre and often conflicting data, and in his not infrequent essays at prophecy he was rarely wrong. It will be remembered that the Japanese began their campaign on land by disembarking in Korea an army which defeated the Chinese at Phyong-yang on September 15. Between that date and the middle of October the Japanese first, or Korean, army advanced slowly, but without opposition, to the Yalu, while a second army was formed and embarked in Japan, its destination being kept a profound secret. The reports from the theatre of war were very vague, and speculation as to what was happening was rife. It was anticipated almost universally in the press that this force would land on the coast of Mongolia, and that its objective was Peking. With this Maurice did not agree. In order to test his judgment, he placed in a sealed envelope, on October 16, his idea of the place where this force would disembark and of the opera-

tions which it was intended to carry out. On the same day he wrote to Lord Wolseley the following letter, which gives the opinion he had formed, and his reasons for forming it :

‘ I am anxious to know how far you agree with me in my views of the future of the Chino-Japanese War. Speculation is rife as to what the Japanese are about to do with the new corps which they have embarked. Now, of course, it is impossible to say what any man may attempt, but Yamagata seems to me to know his business right well ; therefore I don’t think he is going to carry on a campaign this winter against Peking, as all the papers will have it that he is. If he goes by land, he has 800 miles to march ; *ergo*, so far as I can judge, he could not at the best pace reach Peking in less than three months, well on into December, which would, I should say, be madness. Would not you ? I cannot see now that he has time to move by sea, if, as we are told, the Pechili Gulf is closed by ice by the end of October. I think he has a much safer mode of bringing China to her knees. It seems more than probable that Port Arthur is weak on the land side, and if that is so he could use his new force to effect a landing on the Liau-tung Peninsula, at the end of which Port Arthur lies, and attack the fortress on the land side simultaneously with an advance of the fleet. In that case he has a fair prospect of capturing the whole fleet which escaped from the Yalu. Of course, in speculating as to the immediate employment of this new force, much depends on the actual strength of the Chinese on the Yalu. If they are worth their salt, Yamagata may prefer to land the expeditionary force in the first instance in their rear at some point in the north of Korea Bay, but I should think it probable that a mere demonstration would be sufficient to effect his purpose in this respect. I think it likely that some troops may be landed at the right moment to break the telegraph to Port Arthur from the western side, but that the neighbourhood of Port Arthur, or some point on the coast of

Korea Bay between it and the mouth of the Yalu, is the direction in which we shall next hear of the expedition.

‘ Anyway, if you don’t mind, keep this bit of my letter, as after I have thought out a question I like committing myself to paper, as a check on the correctness of my judgment. I think it is good practice.

‘ To sum up, Korea Bay, west of the Yalu, is my idea of the destination of this new force, or, if facilities for landing make that desirable, it may disembark as far round as the head of the Liau-tung Peninsula on the western side ; but for choice I anticipate in the first instance, always assuming a sufficient army of Chinese on the Yalu, a landing which will place the Japanese on the farther bank of the Yalu, and on the flank and rear of the Chinese defences on that river. That seems to me to be more in accordance with Yamagata’s mind, as I read it, than an expedition to Pekin. His next step must, of course, depend on what happens on the Yalu ; but the defeat of the Chinese army in the field must, I should say, be his first object, and therefore, though he may very likely move westward in order to turn the Chinese defences, yet if, as is asserted, a Chinese army is gathered in the direction of Mukden, it will be thither that he will march. I take it that the capture of Port Arthur, and of the Chinese fleet in it, which ought to be quite feasible for him, and perhaps the capture of Mukden, will be quite sufficient to wring a peace from China, or at worst to make a victorious campaign in the spring a certainty. He will, up to quite late in the winter, be able to keep up his communications with Gensan, which port remains open. Criticize me if you are interested enough to do so. If not, do not destroy this letter until we can verify it. If Yamagata goes at once to Pekin, then I think the fate of Napoleon is before him.’

As is well known, the mysterious army, which was under the command of Marshal Oyama, landed at the mouth of the Hua-yuan River, halfway between Port Arthur and the mouth of the Yalu, on October 24, the day on which Yama-



gata forced the passage of the latter river, and did capture Port Arthur. Further, this success, followed by the capture of Wei-hai-wei, enabled Yamagata to obtain the terms he wished from China without a march to Peking.

A serious accident befell Maurice while at Colchester. A horse reared over with him, injuring his head and spine, and incapacitated him for some time. The move to Woolwich and the work involved in taking over a new command further delayed the publication of a book on which he had been long engaged. 'National Defences' appeared in 1897. It was his only book which failed to command a ready sale. He had begun it as far back as 1888, shortly after the publication of the 'Balance of Military Power,' and he was honest enough to say that a part of it had been written eight years before. On this many of the critics declared that it was all ancient history, and applied to conditions which no longer prevailed. The agitation for a supreme navy, begun by Lord Charles Beresford, in which Maurice had taken an important part,\* had resulted in placing the senior service in a position which it had not held within living memory. The country was disposed to be content with its efforts, and to give itself up with a quiet mind to the rejoicings of the Diamond Jubilee. Something had been done for the army, and press and public were inclined to think that something sufficient.

'It is true,' Maurice wrote in November, 1896, 'that it has been, not the army, but the navy, that has been in actual emergency inadequate. It must in all circumstances be for us the first and vital point to determine whether our naval forces are or are not equal to the tasks that may be imposed on them. Rarely, however, can any considerable national undertaking be carried out without the co-operation of both services. Even in regard to the safety of our homes, great as is our national love for the navy, it is safe to say that the instinct which called into existence our Volunteers is a sound one. It is very natural that officers in the navy

\* Articles in the *Fortnightly Review*, 1888.

should be a little sensitive about anything that appears to imply a doubt of the completeness of the protection afforded by our fleets. To reduce, however, the inhabitants of these islands to a condition of helpless dependence upon external protection, to make of Britons the one race that ignores the claims of patriotism upon personal effort, is not an object worthy of the heirs of Nelson. Greatest of all the services which our national hero rendered us, greater even than the security which he gave us, greater than the bestowal upon us of that sea-power which made the voice of England potent in the councils of the world, was the example which he left us of an ideal patriotic devotion. To ask the compatriots of Nelson to become the idle spectators of struggles designed to leave them in secured ease, without being ready in their own persons, if need were, to defend their homes, is to make of our greatest national advantage a national curse. Moreover, it is certain that the arguments which have been adduced to prove that a naval defence alone can give to our homes that absolute security which our sacred duties towards them make us desire to insist upon have not carried conviction to the minds of Englishmen at large. Those mistake the temper of the nation who suppose that the desire to see the Volunteers and the Militia made into an effective home force, and the wish that the regular army should be in a condition to act with the help of the fleet when any sudden call is made upon our resources by sea and land, are in any way in conflict with the demand for a strong navy. Little as some of our naval friends think it, I am convinced that the Volunteers have been the best friends the sailors have had amongst us. They have been at once the representatives and the sustainers of the patriotic instinct of the nation. The notion of some fixed fund, every penny of which taken for Volunteer efficiency is subtracted from what is needed to insure us an efficient navy, is a pure delusion.’

‘ National Defences ’ was written, therefore, with the object of calling the same attention to the condition of our land

forces, which Lord Charles's efforts had aroused with regard to the navy.

Maurice says in his preface : ' The danger is lest it should be forgotten that to give freedom and power to the navy, and to be able to use it when it is free, the army must be adequate to maintain on land those gifts which we owe to the power of the sea.' In the book he asked of his countrymen that they should make for their safety at least the same sacrifices of service and money as were made by our colonists ; that our regular army should be equipped and organized so as to provide an effective expeditionary force ; and, lastly, that the Militia and Volunteers should be so taken in hand as to make them really available for home defence. For these demands he was held up to obloquy by the critics as a croaker. One said in a prominent journal : ' To state that " Jim Jones, the colonist, has made personal sacrifices of which Tom Smith, the home taxpayer, has never dreamed," is to misrepresent patent facts.' Another wrote, barely two years before the country was denuded almost entirely of its land forces : ' General Maurice, on grounds which cannot be discovered, appears to have persuaded himself that England is defenceless at home. " It would be a terrible thing," he writes, " if the navy had to hang trembling about these islands, deprived of the opportunity of concentrating for some decisive action, lest an unarmed and helpless population should fall a victim to some foreigner who took advantage of its temporary absence to attempt to throw an army on our shores." Hysterical statements of this kind may succeed in alarming Madam, but cannot serve any more useful purpose.'

The book was in no sense a cry of Cassandra. Maurice believed firmly that the sense of the nation was awakening to the responsibilities of Imperial defence, and that the sure way of getting what was required was to convince a public, anxious to know the truth, of our necessities. Though ' National Defences ' produced no immediate result, yet its demands have now for some years been accepted in principle. We are endeavouring to organize an expeditionary force, and



to make our second line troops effective for home defence, while our colonists have long been held up to us as examples of patriotic devotion.

His experience at Woolwich made Maurice a stronger advocate than ever of decentralization. Soon after taking over the command he wrote, apropos of the modifications made in the powers of the Commander-in-Chief when Lord Wolseley succeeded H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge :

‘ The real excess of centralization in our system has, apart from the personal question, not consisted in too much power within the War Office being in the hands of one man, but in this : that so great a mass of work has been thrown on the War Office as a whole that the actual power of any Commander-in-Chief, or even any Secretary of State, has been very small, except in the matter of appointments. No decrees that can be framed, no constitution that can be devised, will give to any man the power really to decide more questions than he can consider in the hours of a working day. The notorious impotence of the Czar to get what he wishes carried out throughout his empire, the hopeless failure of even such a man as Napoleon, admirably described as it has lately been by Captain Mahan, to secure the enforcement of that on which his heart was set, illustrate what we mean. The moment too much work is thrown on a central office, the will of the man at the head of it ceases to be effective. He cannot deal with the mass of matter which is referred to the office. The actual decisions pass absolutely into the hands of a bureaucracy.

‘ Soon after the campaign of 1885 on the Nile I happened to be in a room in the War Office where two of the senior clerks were discussing some of the incidents of that campaign. One had just rushed into the room of his senior in hot indignation. “ Here,” he said, holding out a paper—“ here we have *another* instance of a junior officer taking upon himself to order without higher authority,” something which, as the story showed, was entirely in the public interest and

for the advantage of the country. There spoke the true mind of clerkdom—regulation *against* the service of the country. The antagonism between that sentence and the demand of the ablest soldiers to get men for war purposes trained not to be afraid to accept responsibility could not be more explicit. Therefore one or other of these two antagonistic spirits must be crushed out. A house divided against itself in such fundamental matters cannot stand.

‘ It would be easy to cite specific cases in which five bodies, each supposed to represent the authority of the Commander-in-Chief, have each given decisions without the slightest knowledge of what has been decided by others whose work clashed with their own. In one specimen case it has been commonly bruited that a certain department complained that on a particular question it had not been consulted. The paper was accordingly minuted to it with the remark : “ We have already given five different answers to this request for a decision ; shall we add a sixth ? ” Now, that that results in confusion worse confounded, and that it sorely needs to be remedied, cannot be disputed. For those who locally have to introduce some sort of harmony between these conflicting decisions the task is often a hopelessly impracticable one ; but, as old Cato long since remarked : “ One must have worn the shoe to know where it pinches. ”

‘ What is wanted is that as many questions as possible should be decided on the spot, and that those that go to the War Office should as a rule be only such as are necessary to produce harmony in the working of the different districts, or to determine the necessity of change in established regulation.’

Apart from his military and literary work, Maurice took advantage of being in the neighbourhood of London to resume close connection with his father’s institutions, Queen’s College and the Working Men’s College ; he joined the councils of both, and spoke frequently at their meetings.

Of the objects for which his father founded the latter, he wrote in January, 1897, to a friend :

' As you know, the Working Men's College was started at a time when our country was in a state of ferment, when class hatred was rampant. My father's object was to do his part in "healing the wounds of the daughter of my people." There were plenty of men who, as he well knew, wanted to increase the trouble of the waters in order that they might, for their own ends, more easily fish in the turbid stream. He had only too bitter experience, in the co-operative societies, of the jealousies and mutual distrust of the working men. He wanted them to understand one another, he wanted the best of the University men to understand them. He wanted to get away from the personal struggle to get on. He said to me more than once, expressly in antagonism to the Smiles theory: "We want them to care for their class, and not merely for pushing out of it." I think one must have heard, as I have done as a boy, the gusto with which such songs as "Tom Noddy" were howled in his patient presence to realize the "wound" that he wanted to heal. I don't think you were there in those days, and perhaps that will convey to you no meaning. A few lines will be enough :

' What may a nobleman find to do ?  
 Tim looked up and Tim looked down,  
 He paused and he put on a thoughtful frown,  
 And he held up his hat and he peeped in the crown ;  
 He bit his lip, and he scratched his head,  
 He let go the handle, and thus he said,  
 As the door, released, behind him banged :  
 " An't please you, my lord, there's a man to be  
 hanged."\*

' His sympathy, his wish to heal, were quite as much for the classes that were really asking, "What can we find to do?" as for those who assumed that in all classes other than their own men were all leading idle, vicious lives. He often spoke to me of the idle rich as the dangerous classes of

\* 'Ingoldsby Legends'— 'Hon. Mr. Sucklethumpkin's Story.'



society, but he believed and knew that both the helplessness and the misery of idleness cut deep, and that there were many who were only praying, as far as they knew how to pray, for, as he put it in his last days, "someone who should walk with them as One did on the road to Emmaus."

'It was in all this that the conception of the college was unlike a mechanics' institute or a polytechnic. Heaven forbid that, because the conception was different, I should use it to disparage the splendid work that has been done by both; but both—all that grand fellow Hogg's work, which has been truly national work—were according to the gospel of Smiles. Hogg's personal devotion and self-sacrifice have indeed had their reward. It was brotherly help extended to those who wanted and were willing to give energy and brains to getting on. For my own personal view I may say, just in order to show that I am putting no ideas of my own in place of my father's, that I believe that for social security and healthy life it is as necessary that air and water should find their own levels, and that the struggle upwards of steam should not be stopped in rising to the surface, as that oil should be poured upon the troubled waters. For having helped to bring that about I give all credit to the mechanics' institutes and to the polytechnics, but it was not, not, not, my father's thought.

'Toynbee Hall, the Oxford House, the Working Women's College, and many like efforts, of which the name is legion, including in some measure "slumming"—though, of course, that often takes a vulgar form from its period of fashionability—and all Miss Hill's work, are the true brothers, sisters, and cousins, of the Working Men's College, and most of them acknowledge the family connection. Mechanics' institutes and polytechnics are of eminently excellent parentage, but have no cousinhood even.'

In January, 1897, General Maurice was elected to the Council of the Royal United Service Institution, at which he often lectured and spoke, while he managed to find time

to help forward many good works both in the borough of Woolwich and in London. These various activities entailed a good deal of public speaking, and he was often placed in some difficulty by the garbled versions of his speeches in the press. He acquired a horror of the ways of the junior reporter, and expressed himself forcibly on the subject at this time in a letter to a friend :

‘ There is in the profession of reporting a very limited number of men who are past-masters in the art. These men can take down words as fast as they are spoken with an accuracy which is simply amazing. They are so rare that they obtain high salaries, and are regularly employed by the Committees of the Houses of Parliament and other public bodies. When a great statesman like Mr. Chamberlain or Mr. Balfour is known to be about to make an important speech, some of these men are sent down to report it and give it textually as it is delivered, but it is a costly business to employ them. Further, the great local newspapers of Manchester, Birmingham, and other big provincial towns, employ men of this class for subjects of great local interest. But these men represent an insignificant minority of the profession. If I allowed that they were one in a hundred of those who are called “reporters” I am sure that I should greatly exaggerate their numbers. They can not only perfectly take down notes in shorthand, and reproduce them *in extenso*, but, being highly-educated and well-informed men, who at once catch the point of what is said, if any verbal slip is made they correct it intelligently. The mass of the profession call themselves “reporters” because they have learnt a little shorthand and can type fairly. They are usually ill-educated, and naturally are to be had cheap. The great newspapers habitually employ this class of men as a matter of economy in cases where the speech is not likely to be of national importance. Neither the speeches of general officers, nor for that matter those of ordinary members of Parliament, come usually under this head. The

consequences are that what is said at ordinary public meetings rarely reaches the ears of those who are not present. These gentlemen at their own sweet will substitute what they think the speaker ought to have said for what he actually did say. As they have but the slightest notion of the niceties of the English language, and are exceptionally ignorant of anything connected with the army, no soldier who is often asked to speak at public meetings or dinners can do so without dread of what may be put into his mouth. Very properly, therefore, it has been decided by the Law Courts that the reports of speeches are the copyright of the reporter. They are usually very original compositions.'

The late Miss Octavia Hill, one of whose sisters married my father's brother, had found in her work, in the poorest quarters of Southwark, that the lack of all sense of discipline amongst the boys who roamed the streets was one of her most serious difficulties. She invoked my father's help in starting a cadet corps in the year 1889. He got Lord Wolseley to take the chair at the inaugural meeting, as to which he wrote to Miss Octavia Hill :

' I will endeavour to speak to the subject you suggest. I think, however, it would be well to get someone who has experience of the effect of the creation of cadet corps to speak to the positive benefit arising therefrom if you possibly can. I have seen in a particularly poor neighbourhood the effect produced by the Board School discipline and drill, which, though it is capable of considerable improvement, is, as is inevitable, conducted on military principles. My wife and I acted for some time as Board School managers at West Kensington, where some of the young urchins who come in from the neighbouring districts cannot have been much, though they were probably somewhat, above the standard you strike in Southwark. With your knowledge of London, it will probably enable you to place them, when I say that, if ever one saw an exceptionally bright and intelligent child, well cared for and tidily dressed, one was told it was the



child of a publican. My reason, therefore, for asking you to get someone, if you can, to speak to the specific fact of the benefit which, as experience has shown, the children derive from such training, is less that I could not say it, than that I do not think I am so likely to be believed when I do say it as someone who is not a soldier. So I would suggest that you would let me speak rather to the cause of the benefit and the *modus operandi*, so far, I mean, as concerns the kind of influences that are brought to bear on the lad, than to the fact that the lad himself does benefit. On this side of the subject I think that I can interest the audience, and that they will probably accept my testimony; but I fear that for me to speak, and still more to be the one speaker, to the fact that the boys benefited will not tend to produce all the effect that you desire, because of the feeling which is specially rampant in an English audience, against a tailor praising cloth and a shoemaker leather.'

My father succeeded in obtaining some concessions from the War Office for the corps, which was started successfully as the Cadet Battalion of the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment. It has now spread from Southwark, and has companies in other parts of London. While in command at Woolwich he became its honorary Colonel, a post which he held until his death.

He had, therefore, long taken a deep interest in the subject of boy-training.

'I want to call your attention,' he wrote to a friend in 1897, 'to the altogether admirable work which Fox, our superintendent of gymnasia, is doing for the army. He has remodelled our system of gymnastic training, abolishing the old methods, which produce a limited number of men with certain muscles abnormally developed, and break down more than they benefit, in favour of a reasoned programme of general development, based on medical knowledge and scientific principles. Anyone who has seen, as I have seen, the effect of this system upon the underfed and

undersized recruits we now receive cannot but feel that it holds out great promise, not only to the army, but to the nation at large. I am unable to believe that we shall have exhausted the possibilities of voluntary service until we have taken up the training of our children in the care and culture of their bodies, in discipline, and in citizenship, as seriously as we have taken up the training of their minds. We have in our primary schools much of the necessary machinery to our hands. The chief obstacle which prevents us from completing it and setting it in motion is the silly bogey of militarism. I have sufficient faith in the good sense of my countrymen to believe that when they know the facts they will see that bogey to be what it is, an empty turnip lit by a guttering dip. The best methods of teaching discipline are the results of centuries of experience, and are used in the armies of all civilized peoples. Fox has found that he obtains the best physical results by combining with his gymnastic exercises a form of drill which teaches discipline at the same time that it improves the body. It is ludicrous to suppose that, if we take advantage of the accumulated knowledge we now possess on this subject to train the bodies of our lads, and to teach them habits of order and obedience, we shall rear up a race of men thirsting to prod bayonets into their fellows.'

General Maurice also became honorary Colonel of the 3rd Kent (Royal Arsenal) Artillery, one of the Volunteer units under his command in which he took an especial interest. It will have been gathered already that he believed firmly in the value of the Volunteers, and he was especially anxious that they should be provided with an adequate force of field artillery. The 3rd Kent Artillery was at the time commanded by Sir Henry Hozier, a man who, before embarking upon a successful business career, had done remarkable service as a soldier, and was the author of several valuable military works, amongst them the standard English account of the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. The batteries

of the 3rd Kent were then amongst the very few of the Volunteer force which were equipped with mobile guns. They had the advantages of close association with regular field artillery and of having a number of ex-gunners in their ranks. Maurice was impressed by their efficiency, which he looked upon as of hopeful augury for the Volunteer force. He considered that it showed that in favourable circumstances the creation of effective Volunteer artillery was not, as most regular gunners then believed, an impossibility.

While in command at Woolwich Maurice became a member of the Council of the Royal Army Temperance Association. He was deeply interested in the temperance movement, not only in the army, but in the country generally, understanding temperance to mean moderation, and was himself one of the most moderate and abstemious of men, though never at any time a total abstainer. With the lack of moderation shown by some of the advocates of temperance he had little patience. The Association includes among its members both total abstainers and those who are pledged to a moderate use of alcohol. He did not consider that the views of the latter body were fairly represented, and after the annual meeting of 1898 he wrote to Dr. Edgehill, then Chaplain-General, in reply to a letter about the meeting:

‘ I was quite sure when I heard the beginning of your speech at the A.T.A. meeting that you were going to take the wise line you mention. If I could have felt my way to speaking with good humour on the matter, I should have remained to support you; but I was not sure that I should have been successful in that line, because not I only, but all of those in my immediate neighbourhood, some of whom are habitually total abstainers, had felt so strongly the mischief that was being done by the speeches that were being made, that I could not have spoken without a very strong and emphatic protest. It appeared to me that to undertake to support a vote of thanks to the speakers in the circum-



stances, however carefully one led round to the other side, would be rather to act like an inverted Balaam, to be called on to bless, and, with whatever qualifications, in fact to curse. The A.T.A. professes to be an alliance on behalf of temperance of two entirely different forces; the one represents a very small, vigorous, and enthusiastic minority of the people of England and of the army. The other represents not only all authority within the army, but the vast majority of the people of England, and, despite the fact that many of those in the army who are not total abstainers do give way to drink occasionally, it represents also the better mind of the overwhelming majority of the army. Yet on the A.T.A. the minority is represented, as the speakers said, by a huge majority, and the majority by a comparatively insignificant minority. Surely this ought to give the most fanatical total abstainers cause for thought. Yet it gives them, as the speakers showed, none. To what is this due? The executive belongs mainly to one of the branches supposed to form an equal alliance.

‘If I, being an Englishman, am charged, as Lord Cromer has been in Egypt, or still more as Hart has been in China, with duties in which France and England have an equal right to share, clearly it is my business to overweight rather the side against which I know my own predilections will incline me, to give to the Frenchman rather more than justice in selecting the man I believe to be the best man. Hart has carried this so far in China that he has in the Customs, I believe, small comparatively as the trade of France is, more Frenchmen than Englishmen. Lord Cromer is in a somewhat different position, because of the positive opposition of many Frenchmen, but in principle the same will obtain. In an association of allies such as the A.T.A. it is not fair-dealing to select as speakers only the men of the most fanatical type of the one section, men who spend their whole time in abusing, sneering at, and treating as weak brethren, those who are associated with them. Now, to have the noble non-abstainers whom I have known

insulted in this way is a thing to which I, for one, will not give place by submission for an hour. I say distinctly that the holiest men, the noblest men, the most self-sacrificing men, the men who are most completely able to make every personal sacrifice to what they believe to be the cause of justice and of right, whom I have known, have in no one single instance been among the total abstainers. I, as you, do give every allowance as to *weak* brethren to those who, impassioned by evils they have seen, are unable to be temperate in their use of what is the most unruly member and the hardest to restrain, the tongue. I know that the question is to be brought before the council, and certainly I shall endeavour to have it fairly faced. I perhaps more than most have a great regard for my Puritan ancestors, and a great admiration for much that they achieved, but I should in our day dread at least as much the setting up of a Puritan tyranny as of Milton's prelatiical despotism. That the fanatics would, if they could, set up such a tyranny, that they already act on the principle that no faith need be kept with those who do not agree with them, and that the ordinary rules of fair-play are not binding on them, must be manifest to everyone who was present at the meeting the other afternoon.'

The outbreak of the Boer War found Maurice still at Woolwich. It was naturally a bitter disappointment to him not to be sent to South Africa, but he fully realized that his very qualities had so shaped his career as to make his selection for command in the field improbable. Throughout his service there had existed a feeling that military writers and students of war had their uses, but that these did not include the leading of men. No system existed under which those who had proved their capacity as thinkers could be given opportunities of training themselves by practice in peace for command in war. Indeed, as long as the peace organization of our military districts had no connection with the war organization of the army the opportunities for

such practice, at home at least, fell only to the lucky few. In these circumstances it is not surprising that, on the one or two occasions in which a man, who had made for himself a reputation as a student of war, was given a command in the field, the results failed altogether to equal the anticipations which had been formed. With these failures in mind, the authorities were little inclined to repeat the experiment.

The Royal Albert Docks, which were included in the Woolwich district, formed one of the chief ports used during the war, and for the first months of its duration work in the command was carried on at very high pressure. It was naturally a subject of great gratification to him to be able to assist in and watch both the mobilization and the steady flow of reinforcements which left this country for the front. He saw in them a complete vindication of Lord Wolseley's policy of the short-service system, and of those reforms which, incomplete as they were, he himself had done his best to further.

As more normal conditions supervened Maurice found time for other work, and assisted by his writings in the reviews and newspapers to guide and calm the judgment of the public on the events of the war. For some years before the war he had protested constantly against the principles on which the tactical training of our infantry was conducted. He wrote in 1898 apropos of the Battle of Omdurman :

' There are many aspects under which the campaign is specially interesting to soldiers, because it is the first in which we have been able to judge in warfare and under favourable conditions of the appalling power of our new weapons—notably of the effect of rifled shrapnel, of an approach to quick-firing guns, of long-range infantry fire, and, above all, of the howitzers with their high-explosive shells. In detail many of these are matters of merely technical interest, but the experience of the Battle of Omdurman very fully confirms the impression which had



been drawn beforehand from peace experiment—that, whenever the next great fight takes place between European Powers, it will be under conditions so utterly unlike even those of the war of 1870-71 between France and Germany that all our methods must be adapted to the change. Perhaps it will at last silence the folly of those who have, even up to now, maintained that weapons make no difference in tactics, and that if only we would revert to the mode of fighting of our ancestors, and accept the losses which they endured, we should be sure of victory. If any accumulation of numbers or any supreme readiness to sacrifice life could enable a body of attacking troops to advance in front against modern infantry and artillery fire, beyond doubt the Dervishes would have broken into our ranks at Omdurman. Therefore that battle gives, under this aspect, food for much reflection.'

The point of this passage is that, at the time when he wrote it, our infantry was being, and had for some years been, trained to carry out those frontal attacks which proved so costly and disastrous in the South African War. Of the causes which had led to the adoption of this form of training Maurice wrote in September, 1902 :

' During the Nile campaign for the relief of Gordon, 1884-85, the Dervishes forced their way into the square that was in course of being formed by a miscellaneous body of our men during the desert march from Korti to Metemmah. They were all killed, but many of them within the square. They had not broken any face of the square, nor when the square was properly formed were they ever able to approach it any more than the Zulus had been. Mr. Rudyard Kipling, throwing into popular form the general impression of the splendid valour of these wild sons of the desert, gave forth the verses the burden of which is—

' Here's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with your hayrick head of hair!  
You big, black, bounding beggar, for you broke a British square.

'Fuzzy-Wuzzy never did break a British square, or a regularly-formed line of any kind, and an historical error in the case of a writer so popular, especially with soldiers, as Mr. Kipling was a serious one. It tended to produce the conviction, among those who were not much addicted to the study of the history of their own army, or of any other, that, provided only closed ranks went forward in sufficiently serried masses, they were bound to overthrow men firing steadily at them as they advanced. From this and other causes it began to be the avowed purpose at Aldershot to teach "Fuzzy-Wuzzy"—in other words, to encourage those frontal attacks which have ended in bloodshed and disaster. The drill-book then declared that a frontal attack of three to one was to be considered to have captured a position. All umpire rulings were based on similar assumptions. Anyone who thought, as probably every officer who has had much experience of the Boer War now thinks, that not thirty to one massed men advancing directly, and without the co-operation of a flank attack, against a properly prepared position, held by good shots and good infantry, would carry it, was pronounced a heretic.'

The closeness of Woolwich to London made it a favourite visiting-place for royal and distinguished personages who wished to see something of the Arsenal, of the Royal Artillery, and of the numerous institutions connected with the 'Royal Regiment.' Their Majesties King George and Queen Mary (as Duke and Duchess of York), H.R.H. Princess Christian, H.R.H. the Duchess of Albany, H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, the Shah of Persia, the Khedive, and Li Hung Chang, were among those who came to Woolwich during Maurice's command. But the most important and interesting of such visits was one paid by Queen Victoria in the spring of 1900. The Herbert Hospital at Woolwich was then the second largest military hospital at home, and was soon filled with wounded from the war. Maurice took advantage of the fact that the Queen was for a short time

in residence at Buckingham Palace to inquire of Sir Arthur Bigge (now Lord Stamfordham) whether a visit to the hospital would be at all feasible. Her Majesty, although her health had already begun to fail, and she was approaching her eighty-first birthday, at once agreed to the proposal. During Her Majesty's inspection of the wounded an incident occurred which shows how enthusiastically her Christmas present of chocolate to her army in South Africa had been received by the rank and file. In nearly every case the men preserved the boxes intact. One man, however, who had been severely wounded and was in the hospital, had only his empty box to show. One night when very hungry he had eaten the chocolate. For this he was so jeered at by his comrades that he came to consider he had done something shameful, and the worry began to affect his health. The Queen, informed of the story, at once put matters right by a kindly message that she was glad to hear he had been sensible enough to use the chocolate for the purpose she had intended. This was one of the last public functions Her Majesty was able to undertake. In the Birthday Gazette of this year Maurice was made a K.C.B.

Maurice at last obtained a chance, in the summer of 1900, of carrying out an experiment he had long meditated. The country was being rapidly denuded of troops, and this made the authorities more ready to listen to proposals that might increase our forces at home. As far back as 1890, when he started the new series of the *United Service Magazine*, Maurice had opened its pages to a discussion as to the best mounted arm for the Volunteers, and had come to the conclusion, in which he was supported by Sir Evelyn Wood, that the cycle gave us an admirable means of forming a body of mobile infantry which would be invaluable for home defence. Since then he had given much thought to the subject, and was able to induce the War Office to sanction cyclists' manœuvres in Sussex on a scale likely to lead to some practical results. Of his scheme he wrote in June, 1900, before the manœuvres :



‘ I have in my own district been greatly impressed by the facilities presented by cycle work for overcoming the difficulty which at present exists in many counties for placing rifle ranges within reach of those who wish to use them. Zealous cyclists have actually gone over to Bisley, starting at 4.30 p.m. after their work was over, obtaining the time they required at Bisley, and returning here the same night. Some of our cyclists have been to *Brighton and back here\** in little over five hours ! The expansion of the opportunities for rifle practice which this presents, and the difficulties which would be removed from the path of the Government in providing rifle ranges if a connection could be established between the cyclist and the rifleman, and some adequate organization could be introduced, scarcely needs further proof. I have cited, no doubt, the cases of somewhat exceptional riders, and the average could not be reckoned upon to do anything like this, but a large margin remains which, if it were only made use of for getting rifle training, would be invaluable.

‘ It is, however, necessary that the special facilities presented by England for the utilization of a large body of rifle cyclists for defensive purposes should be effectively brought home to the people, and I do not think that this could be done except by a practical illustration.

‘ The estimates formed at the headquarters of the great cyclist organizations of the country give about one million as the number of male cyclists in this island. If out of this number we could induce even a moderate proportion to enroll themselves as riflemen, I believe this would do more than anything else to gain the time we should require in order to defeat any invasion or raid made by an enemy. The distance from the coast to London is very short. An enemy who meant to do any serious mischief would come with the intention of striking for London in the shortest possible time. I believe that, from the very large number of roads available for cycles, and from the fact that an

\* Woolwich.

enemy would be nearly restricted to roads for movement, a check could be more rapidly made on his advance by a proper use of cyclists than by any other means.

‘ The great advantage that a body of cyclists possesses for military purposes is that it is independent of any elaborately organized supply or ammunition train. The roads and railways in this country are so numerous, and the distances to which a cyclist can go back for his supplies are so great, that very simple steps only would be necessary to insure that both were available for him. According to my idea, only small bodies of cyclists should be deployed at the front along each road which they are intended to defend ; but the number of roads is so great, and the use that could be made of other parties of cyclists at some distance in rear along the same road would be so important, that I believe the largest number of rifle cyclists whom we could develop would be easily utilized in hampering and delaying, at least, the advance of a hostile army.’

The idea was eagerly taken up by many regular officers, Volunteers, and civilians, who were interested in the question of the military use of the bicycle. The manœuvres, though on a smaller scale than Maurice had hoped, were completely successful. He said of them in the following year :

‘ There are certain conditions under which there is no agent for transferring force so effective as the cycle. The distance along good roads that the cycle can convey troops far surpasses anything that the horse can do. During the manœuvres in Sussex last year some of the distances that were traversed by certain troops were startling. The 2nd Warwickshire Volunteers rode from Coventry to Hendon, a distance of 100 miles, on Saturday, August 4. On Sunday they rode from Hendon to Cuckfield, a distance of seventy-five miles. Their ride from London had been in the rain all day, and they did not seem to be fatigued. One of their men went the same evening to Hurstpierpoint and back with orders, a further distance of fourteen miles. It is

obvious that there is no cavalry in the world which can touch that. They did excellent work on the Monday. The 1st Royal Sussex rode from Bisley to their billets at Burgess Hill on Saturday, and then acted as cycle orderlies all along the Billingshurst Cross Road to conduct detachments to their billets. The Cyclist Bearer Section of the Woolwich companies of the Volunteer Army Medical Corps, on Saturday, August 4, rode from Perham Down, eighty miles as the crow flies, to Horsham. They rode from Horsham to Cuckfield on Sunday, and then took part in the manœuvres both on Sunday and Monday. The forces from the South-Eastern District moved from Shorncliffe to the line of the Ouse, a distance of sixty-two miles, in one day. Those are distances which represent the enormous facility which the cycle gives for the transfer of forces along good roads. In England we are in this favourable condition—that we have in all directions, not merely good roads, but roads lying close together. In the particular portion of the Sussex district in which my experiment was carried out there were good cycling roads, all leading towards the coast, and only three-quarters of a mile apart, over a front of twenty-four miles. It is tolerably obvious that the gain is great if you are able to deliver troops with such rapidity of movement as I have described, and in such numbers as may be moved along many roads over a wide front. As the country between the roads leading towards our coasts is for the most part of a peculiarly defensible quality, if you are able to move even moderately large numbers along each of the several roads, you would have in the aggregate a force which it would be extremely inconvenient for an enemy to ignore.

‘ Therefore I think that, if there are obstacles in the way of creating cycle corps, it is worth while to remove them. Looking at the large question of the defence of the kingdom, I cannot see that there is any doubt that one difficulty we shall always have will be that of gaining time. If we can gain time, we shall always be able with ample resources to meet any force that lands. If it is possible, wherever an



enemy lands, to do what we were able to do at Brighton—namely, deliver forces from a distance of at least 150 miles on either flank, within striking distance of an enemy's landing, by means of the cycle, before he is ready to meet them—then in such enclosed country as we have in England, having available men who know all the different districts perfectly, we shall be able to impose a delay which would most seriously hamper an enemy. I said in my report on the cycle manœuvres in the Brighton district last year that I feel perfectly convinced, from what we were able to do, that no army pushing up in that district—and it is very much the same as other coast districts in England—would have been able to advance against the force which could be delivered by cycles alone, at a more rapid rate than four miles a day. If we can enforce that delay, there is plenty of time to get ready a striking force, even if we are almost denuded as we were last year.

‘There are unquestionably certain difficulties in the way of cycling development in England, and the first of these is the curious conservatism with which we in England receive anything that is new. It applies to us all. There are two stories with which I am fond of illustrating that point. Some of you may have heard that, when Sir Walter Scott was staying in London on a certain occasion, he wrote to a friend in Scotland, in language rather more expletive than I should care to reproduce, to the effect that “There is some horrible fool here in London who is actually proposing to light the streets of London with gas, and, what is yet more amazing, there are some other yet more absolute idiots who are going to let him try his hand at it.” You all perhaps know that Lord Derby, the Premier, undertook to eat the boiler of the first steamer that crossed the Atlantic. Those were two perfectly representative men. They were neither of them men more lacking in common-sense, to use the mildest term, than any of us. Sir Walter Scott and Lord Derby are not names to be treated with contempt; and if they were capable of that sort of resistance to any-

thing new, I think it is tolerably safe to say that that is a national characteristic which we have to recognize. It always has been so, and always will be so, and many of our most valuable national qualities have been born of that sort of conservatism ; but, as we are feeling in all the commercial relations of life, our kinsmen across the Atlantic are running away from us because they meet novelties in exactly the opposite way, and do everything they can to encourage anyone who has something new to bring forward, provided he will have it tested and tried. I think it is necessary that in all cases, not merely military, we should "wake up" to recognize that the world does not stand still, that we must move, accept situations as they arise, and face them under the conditions of the day.

' I venture to suggest that there is some danger that the experiences of the present war may in one respect mislead. There is an impression abroad, because we have found it extremely difficult to dispose of the resistance of a number of Boer farmers, that therefore, if we can only get a number of English riflemen all over the country, we can very considerably improve the defence of England. Well, I think there is one simple illustration that may bring pretty effectually home to the minds of the nation that that is scarcely so. There was a time when a great financier had the question put to him, "What would happen if the Bank of England was occupied by a foreign Power?" His famous answer, "That must never be," is obviously true. He meant that, supposing that that were to happen, it would be a stroke at the very centre of our whole commercial life, and would be practically the death-blow of England, or, at any rate, a blow from which we should have incalculable difficulty in recovering. What I want to suggest is, that nothing the Boers have done throughout this war has for more than a relatively short time prevented our army from going wherever it wanted, that it has marched into Bloemfontein, into Pretoria, and into other places wherever it required to go. Therefore resistance such as that made by the Boers

would not have protected the Bank of England from the invading army. On the other hand, I think it is necessary that we should realize that we may obtain very great value, at least for delaying purposes, out of a body which is something other than a rigidly controlled military force. If we can get sufficient unity and sufficient co-operative action among a number of men who can take advantage of our close country to impose delay upon an enemy, it is sufficient for us without their being under precisely the form of unity which we find necessary for the regular soldier. My view of the cases is that we want people, whom I should like to call Cycle Riflemen, drilled so far as to be able to move in close bodies on their cycles along a road, but, so far as their actual fighting is concerned, trained chiefly to take up positions in comparatively small numbers and to fall back under the protection of other forces of the same kind, or to surprise an enemy by appearing suddenly on his flank, or to do other similar work of that kind. The only cycle drill necessary is that required to enable considerable bodies to move in a concentrated form along a road. Everything else is a question of actual tactics of such a kind as the men would very much enjoy. The training for this could be carried out in a comparatively small number of days in the year.'

After one or two further experiments, and some delay owing to the more pressing changes in army organization which followed the war, the cyclist question was taken seriously in hand on the formation of the Territorial Force, which now numbers among its units twelve cyclist battalions, whose special duty it is to be the first to meet the invader.

Maurice continued at Woolwich till the spring of 1902. The normal term of his command had expired in 1900, but he was asked to remain on first until the end of the war, and then until the new scheme of organization had taken shape. It is curious that the actual cause of his leaving Woolwich was the grouping of the regular forces at home into the formations in which they are intended to fight in war, a reform which he had been advocating for the greater part of his service,



## VI

‘ Sir John Moore ’—National Health—History of the South African War—Last Days.

SHORTLY before Maurice left Woolwich he was appointed a member of the War Office committee, formed under the chairmanship of Sir Robert Biddulph, to inquire into the work of the Remount Department during the Boer War. This committee, after reviewing the evidence, reported that it was rather the system than any individual that was at fault, a finding hotly resented by the press, which thirsted for a victim, and took the view that soldiers would naturally seek to shield a comrade, however worthy he might be of blame. Neither were the War Office authorities, who desired to report to an angry Parliament that some definite disciplinary action had been taken, disposed to view the work of the committee with a kindly eye. Its findings were completely upheld a year later by the Royal Commission on the conduct of the war, but in the meantime Maurice had, unfortunately for himself, reached such a position on the list of Major-Generals that he would either have to be promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-General or retired. With no one disposed to voice his claims as against the many candidates with distinguished service in South Africa, his active career as a soldier was closed.

He at once set about completing two works which he had had for some years in hand. The first of these was the editing of the Diary of Sir John Moore, the second an investigation into the causes of the physical incapacity which accounted for the rejection or discharge of a large number of those who wished to become soldiers. Maurice

had undertaken as far back as 1889 to write a Life of Moore. Lord Aberdare, who saw a publisher's announcement to that effect, remembered having read many years before a copy of Moore's journal, which had been made by Lady Napier, wife of Sir William Napier, the lady who, as Miss Caroline Fox, had engaged Moore's affections, and through the instrumentality of General Lynedoch Gardiner placed himself in communication with Maurice. This resulted first in bringing Maurice into touch with the representatives of Sir John Moore's family, and later in the discovery of the missing journal, an event which changed completely Maurice's plans. He was so struck by the picture of the man which Moore's own account of the events of his life presented that he decided to abandon the proposed biography, and instead to edit the journal, confining his additions to what was necessary to complete the story. The announcement mentioned above also brought Maurice into communication with Sir William Hunter, who was then engaged on his Life of Sir Bartle Frere. Sir William Hunter wrote in April, 1889, to ask Maurice whether he proposed to touch upon the story of the difference of opinion between Moore and Mr. Hookham Frere, the English Plenipotentiary at the Court of Spain, and to get Maurice's views upon the article on Hookham Frere in the current edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.' Maurice answered :

'The one fault I have to find with the article in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" on Hookham Frere touches the expression that Frere thought the "bolder course"\* the safer. I suggest that if I saw a mad bull about to charge a woman and drive her over a precipice, and having in my pocket a red rag, the use of which I understood but an onlooker did not, proceeded to wave it in the bull's face, thereby drawing the beast after me and saving the woman,

\* The 'bolder course' was an advance on Madrid, which Frere advocated, as against Moore's proposal to retire on Corunna after the advance to Sahagun.

it might be true for the onlooker, who had urged me to keep the rag in my pocket and to run to the side of the woman, to boast that he had persuaded me to take the "bolder course," but this would be hardly a fair or complete description of my conduct. I have great respect for Sir Bartle Frere, and a warm appreciation of Hookham Frere as a graceful man of letters, and I am most anxious to treat them both with all consideration. But I do not think that it will be possible to avoid dealing with Frere's relations with Moore, and I am anxious to show, as far as Moore is concerned, that Sir Bartle's references to him were not justified.'

Upon this Sir William Hunter sent Maurice the passage in which he proposed to deal with the incident. Maurice answered :

' If I were writing the passage myself, I would put it thus : " In either case the Plenipotentiary was sacrificed to a false popular assumption as to the facts. In Southey's view the action of the General was merely and only disastrous. Against that action the Plenipotentiary had personally and officially protested in the strongest terms. In Napier's belief, the action of the General, which had consisted in an advance against the communications of the French army, followed by an immediate retreat as soon as he knew that he had drawn Napoleon after him, had been characterized by a boldness of conception and skill in execution worthy of a great commander. In his view, the sufferings and loss which attended the retreat were the inevitable result of the situation into which the English army had been thrust by a Government ignorant of the actual condition of Spain. Moreover, Napier believed that the effect of the campaign had been to save Spain for the time from being crushed under the heel of Napoleon. In his view, Frere's mistake had consisted in not realizing the services which Moore was thus rendering to Spain, and in pressing too vigorously upon Moore a different course of action. In either case, therefore, the alleged reasons for the sacrifice of Frere were based on



ignorance of the facts. If Southey was right, Frere had stepped out of his way to endeavour to stop the very action for which he was condemned. If Napier was right, Frere's error had consisted in representing only too faithfully the popular view, which disapproved of a course of action fruitful in advantages to Spain, but involving great sacrifices for the army which secured them. It is difficult to see how those who follow either historian can fail to believe that Frere was sacrificed by the Government which he represented to a popular clamour, of which they knew the injustice."

'I assume in this passage that you have good authority for the statement you make that Frere was at the time believed to have been responsible for the retreat on Corunna. This is very interesting and quite new to me. I had always supposed that, at least as far as the English Ministry was concerned, the avowed ground must have been that Frere had exceeded his powers in some of his communications to Moore. My objection to the historical accuracy of your statement as it stands would be, that an ordinary reader, knowing nothing of the facts, would suppose that Moore had only substituted a retreat on Corunna for the advance on Madrid which Frere had proposed. But when Napier, after describing the magnificent preparations which Napoleon had made for the conquest of Spain, declares that "the subjugation of Spain appeared inevitable, when the genius and vigour of one man frustrated Napoleon's plans at the very moment of execution," he is not thinking of the retreat to Corunna, but of the advance upon Soult's force at Sahagun and Saldana. The actual defeat of the French cavalry on December 20 by Lord Paget, and the preparations made on December 23 for the attack on Soult's whole force, obliged Napoleon to change the direction of all his plans, to abandon the conquest of Spain, and to direct almost his entire army to intercept Moore's retreat upon Portugal. Then, and not before—certainly not one moment too soon—Moore began his retreat on Corunna. That is what I mean by the red rag illustration. As your story runs,

the analogy would not be the flaring of the rag in the bull's face, but a panic run abandoning the woman to her fate. From my point of view, the one grave charge against Frere is that he continually and repeatedly sent false information to Moore. Thus, ten days after Madrid had fallen, at a time when Napoleon had at Madrid itself 60,000 men and was dating all his orders from Madrid, Frere writes from Merida on December 14 saying that the whole French force to be dealt with did not exceed 26,000 men (although on December 2 Morla, the traitor, had, with Frere's sanction and knowledge, declared that 75,000 Spanish troops and all the inhabitants were then gathering in Madrid for the defence of the capital), and farther in the same letter from Merida that there was "no official information of the fall of Madrid." Yet Frere had approved of the flight of the Junta to Merida. Why was it necessary for the supreme Junta to fly if within a defensible town such vast forces were gathered to resist such insignificant French numbers?

'I think that the evidence is complete that Frere's passionate enthusiasm for the Spaniards made him put on such roseate spectacles that he was really not able to see plain facts, that he allowed an actual traitor who designed the destruction of the English army to impose on him, and that he lent the whole sanction of his great authority, backed by the fact that he was at the very centre of information, to enforce as reliable information upon Moore statements which were not only false—false in relation to the gravest and most important matters on which the existence of the English army depended—but known to be false by the men who gave him the information. The real charge against Frere as a diplomatist is, therefore, that he failed in the first duty of a diplomatist, that of gauging the characters of the men with whom he had to deal. Of all this, however, Southey knew nothing, or said nothing; therefore it is true to say the question turns on Southey *versus* Napier—or, rather, Southey *versus* Napier and the documentary evidence of the Frere-Moore correspondence, supplied in "Narrative of

the British Army in Spain " by Moore's brother, where the whole of both Frere's and Moore's letters, and much more original matter, is given. As you will see, however, this part of the question does not turn upon military authority, but upon a fair application of the ordinary laws of evidence. Therefore I think that, to make your statement at once historically accurate, and to turn the blame where it is deserved, so far as Frere's relations with the Home Government were concerned, what I have suggested would be best. Only, in order to avoid a retort from any friends of the Government, it would be well to make sure that they did allow it to be supposed that Frere had been responsible for the retreat to Corunna, and that they did not reproach him with having deceived Moore as to the facts. If they did the latter, Frere's defence against them would be much more difficult.'

Maurice undertook the task of editing the journal with joy, not merely because of his admiration for Moore's character and generalship, but because the period of Moore's career coincided almost exactly with that dealt with by Mahan in his 'Influence of Sea-Power upon the French Revolution and Empire,' and illustrated admirably the true principles of the employment of amphibious power. On the publication of the Diary of Sir John Moore in the spring of 1904, fifteen years after Maurice had formed his first plans for the work, he wrote to Mahan :

' I do not know whether you will or will not have seen a review of your " Sea-Power " which I wrote for the *United Service Magazine* as soon as the book appeared. It was mainly devoted to preaching to all Englishmen the duty of getting it and studying it ; but incidentally I suggested that in regard to the transactions in the Mediterranean—and especially in Corsica—it was, by no fault of your own, defective, because the materials did not exist in an available form for any adequate study of the share of the army in those events. They were in fact, as I hinted, in my own possession.



‘ It is a long time now since your book established itself as the most important contribution to European history of our time ; but, having had my hands pretty full of other work, I have only now succeeded in bringing out the evidence as to those facts of which I spoke in my old review of your book.

‘ Although immediately the object of my “ Diary of Sir John Moore ” is, of course, the portrait of my hero, yet nearly the whole of it is concerned with the setting forth of the army side of that more properly naval period of our great war.

‘ I have to thank you for half the interest that has been aroused in Moore’s Diary in England, because, till your books, both the “ Sea-Power ” and the “ Nelson,” had become universally famous, people only thought of the Great War as of the War of the Peninsula, preceded by some blundering expeditions, and Nelson’s victories as isolated facts. As it is, partly because of the charm of Moore’s own character as self-portrayed, but largely also because of the preparation of the ground by you, it would have been difficult for any book to have been received with more general appreciation than it has been.

‘ I hardly thought it could have been otherwise, because I had been myself so fascinated with the Diary ; but I am bound to say that the actual reception has far exceeded my expectations in its unanimity and enthusiasm. As yet only the dailies have had time to deal with it, but they have one and all devoted such columns to it that the book has been brought before the English public already very effectually—even before the more purely literary reviews have had time to deal with it.

‘ I am sending it to you to-day, as only a just tribute to your share in its success. I do not know to what extent in America the same conditions obtain as do in England—that everybody knows Moore’s name because of the poem, and that hardly anyone knows anything about him—but apparently no American publisher was inclined to undertake

an American edition, so that there has been no choice but to send copies from here.

‘ They say that the Japanese have been your pupils. May I congratulate you on the way in which they have profited by the instruction? I think, however, that, when we know the whole story, we shall find that, in regard to the combined work of army and navy, they have revived old lessons of which we have not been the teachers. At least, except in the case of the landing at Aboukir after the previous practice at Marmaras Bay, I know of no case in which an embarkation and disembarkation have been carried out as this has been, after elaborate previous practice of both navy, transports, and army. Do you?’

‘ I think you will see from Moore’s Diary that it was not the army only that required the practice, but that it was, and is, essential that the navy should come to realize what modification in their practice is necessary in order to enable an army to embark and disembark with full effect.

‘ Moreover, I think you will see what I have been driving at all my life—that sea-power does not consist merely in the acquiring by the navy of the domain of the sea, and the pressure thereby exerted on the land, but that, for its full effect, it requires the trained co-operation of the navy, transport, and army, in order that the blow may be driven home on land.

‘ I don’t know whether you ever saw a little volume of mine called the “Balance of Military Power in Europe.” It was written some years before you had converted the world to understanding the mighty potency of naval power, and was a cry in the wilderness of protest against the theory, then current, that England ought to base her defence on the assumption that her proper model was Switzerland.

‘ At any rate, as long ago as that it was for the mighty potency of amphibious power that I was contending. At that time we soldiers were almost too successful in converting England to a recognition of the fact that she had forgotten her right arm, the navy. The reply at once was: “Oh yes,

you are quite right. Let us therefore tie up or palsy our left arm, the army."

'I cannot ask you to do *us* the service of putting things right, but, having made a pretty close study of your Cuban campaign, I think the same thing is true of you. I don't think it is too much to ask of the large-mindedness of sailors that they shall return the obligations that we soldiers originally put them under, now that, thanks to you, they have the ear of the world, and we cannot get a hearing. If anyone can set them an example, you can. In the book I send you will find the facts writ large.'

Maurice, when engaged upon the Diary, had been much impressed by the dramatic contrast between the ease and rapidity with which Abercrombie had landed his force in Egypt, a result which, as he hints above, he attributed entirely to the special training in disembarkation which the expedition had received at Marmaras Bay, and the long catalogue of failures where no previous training had been given. On coming to Woolwich he had, therefore, had some old wooden huts equipped with gangways and other fittings to resemble a portion of the deck of a transport as closely as possible, and made practice in embarking and disembarking horses, guns, and vehicles, a regular part of the year's training long before this had become general at home.

Maurice's inquiry into the causes of the wastage amongst recruits for the army began at Woolwich, where it was one of his duties to supervise the discharge of the men unfit for further service, who were collected for treatment at the Herbert Hospital. His attention was drawn to the fact that the greater number of the unfit were men in the first months of their service. Carrying his investigations farther, he discovered that if to these men were added the number of those who presented themselves for enlistment and failed to pass the not very exacting medical inspection, the number of those whose condition was such that the recruiting officers



did not trouble to bring them before the doctors, and the number of those willing to be soldiers who did not present themselves because they knew they were physically incapable, it was apparent that the total of those who desired to serve greatly exceeded the number who ultimately became effective soldiers. In discussing Mr. Brodrick's proposals for the reorganization of the army, he wrote in July, 1901 :

' All are agreed that the provision of the men is the first difficulty that must be dealt with. I am not convinced by the arguments that have been put forward as to the possibility of recruiting an army of the size we require by any increase of the pay such as has been suggested. The abolition as far as possible of irritating stoppages is another matter. Lord Haliburton, who has in former times argued powerfully against any hasty increase of pay, has urged the importance of this concession. Nevertheless, it seems to me that there are some serious facts of grave national import which have been very inadequately faced. Perhaps I can best put the statement bluntly by saying that if all those who are willing to enlist were fit to become soldiers we should have annually many thousands more men than we require either for Mr. Brodrick's scheme or for any that there is the remotest idea of our wishing to adopt. Moreover, by far the larger proportion of the causes which tend to make the recruits who offer themselves unfit for soldiering are due either to unhealthy national conditions, which it is vital to us as a nation to remove, or to gross ignorance on the part of parents as to the right mode of bringing up their children. Taking into account the number of men rejected by examining doctors, the number whom a recruiting sergeant knows cannot pass, whom he therefore does not bring up for inspection, and the frightful number of men who break down in health before they have been two years in the army, having many of them never done a month's effective training, and having most of them passed so long a time in hospital that they have never done enough

work to give them the simplest training as soldiers, I believe it would be very near the mark to say that not 40 per cent. of those who would if they were fit for it take the King's shilling ever become effective soldiers. We point the finger of pity at poor France because her increase of population is so small ; but, whether from an army or any other point of view, of what benefit is it to us as compared with France that we should bring into the world this vast army of cripples ? Many of the causes which tend to produce this state of things are distinctly remediable by adequate national effort. If we spend our money in raising the pay, we extract out of the population, no doubt, a better class of men ; but we leave the deterioration of the national staple behind the army, on which the army ultimately depends, untouched, perhaps aggravated.'

He followed this in January, 1902, with an anonymous article in the *Contemporary*, entitled 'Where to Get Men.' This article attracted considerable attention, and on letting it become known that he was the author he was invited to speak on the subject in various parts of the country, and gave, amongst others, an address before the Civic Society of Glasgow, the substance of which he embodied in a second article in the *Contemporary*, which appeared in January, 1903, under the title 'National Health : a Soldier's Study.' This paper is included in the second part of this book. By means of this propaganda he succeeded in interesting in the subject Mr. Brodrick, then Secretary of State for War, the Prime Minister (Mr. Balfour), and the late Duke of Devonshire. He was warmly supported by Sir William Taylor, the Director-General of the Army Medical Service, and by Sir Lauder Brunton, who had for some time previously been engaged upon a similar campaign. As a result of their combined efforts, a committee of investigation was appointed, under the title of the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Degeneration. Both the title of and the terms of reference to the committee were a little unfortunate, for

they left on the minds of the members and the public an impression that the prime object of the inquiry was to investigate whether, as compared with the past, the nation was degenerating physically, whereas both Sir William Taylor and Maurice had maintained that the medical returns of the army supplied evidence that there existed at the time a considerable stratum of the population which was physically inefficient, and that this inefficiency was mainly due to remediable causes. Maurice certainly grew to believe, as the scope of his inquiries extended, that the evil was more widespread than he had imagined, and was increasing steadily. But he never attempted any definite comparison with the past, as to which he had no data. He wrote in April, 1903 :

‘I cannot think that sufficient attention has yet been directed to the terrible words which have been given to the world in the report just issued as a Parliamentary Paper from the office of the Inspector - General of Recruiting. “The one subject,” he says, “which causes anxiety in the future as regards recruiting is the gradual deterioration of the physique of those classes from whence the bulk of the recruits must always be drawn.” It must be remembered that no statistical figures taken for the whole country represent the extent and gravity of the evil. A short time ago I thought that, allowing for the fact that the recruiters were ordered not to submit to medical examination any candidates not likely to be passed, it would pretty closely express the truth if I put it that three out of every five who were willing to enlist were physically unfit. But from letters which I have received from all parts of the country, and from evidence which has been supplied to me, I believe that that very inadequately represents the danger. The figures for the whole country, of course, include the healthiest parts of the agricultural districts of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and of such as remain in England. These taken all together tend very much to lower the true figure which represents the disastrous condition of things in the towns. In 1899, in



Manchester and its immediate neighbourhood, in the first enthusiasm of the war, 11,000 men offered themselves for enlistment. Of these 8,000 were rejected as physically unfit. Of the remaining 3,000, only a little over 1,000 could be put into the army, the remainder of about 2,000 being accepted for the lower standard of the Militia. Nor is this physical test an exceptionally severe one.

‘ Now, the last census returns show clearly that we are year by year approaching the condition of the townsmen represented by the Manchester figures, and have in the country fewer and fewer of the stalwart breed of peasants to cloak over the physical degeneracy of the remainder. In England 77 : 23 is the proportion between townsmen and countrymen, and the towns increase daily ; but the Manchester figures are not the worst, nor nearly the worst. There is probably no town in England where such noble efforts have been made by patriotic men and women to stem the tide of deterioration ; and though, unsupported as they have been by any such enthusiasm as responds alike in Church and State to the cry of Codlin *v.* Short, and suffering as they have been from the fact that the wealthy of Manchester live in the country districts outside, and do not know how much help is needed, they have felt that they were setting Dame Partington’s mop against the tide ; yet much has been done. The evidence is, I believe, certain that the most serious of all the forms of physical deterioration is now setting in, not in the large towns, bad as is their case, but in the small towns and large villages. Dr. Hewitt, for instance, the Chairman of the Health Committee of the Cheshire County Council, declared, at the jubilee meeting last year of the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, that “ there are towns where the death-rate of children amounts to from 200 to 300 per 1,000 children born (*i.e.*, therefore, including all classes). . . . I have found that there are months of the year during which the death-rate of children amounts very often to the appalling figure of 800 per 1,000. That is the case in many of the smaller towns, where it seems to be nobody’s business

to enlighten or educate the people on the subject." And he adds what is the full explanation of the reports received from all parts of the country from the medical officers: "It is not merely the children that die which we lose, but there are vast numbers that live a very much lower standard of life than they might have lived if they had been properly brought up." Is there, can there, be any doubt of the truth of the words he adds? "I do not think there is any exaggeration in saying that it is a matter of national importance." As he puts it, "What will be the state of things at the end of this century? What are the towns going to be like if some effort is not made to make them different from what they are at present?"

'Now, efforts, magnificent efforts, have been made by isolated societies and isolated men and women. Nothing can have been more admirable than the work that has been done by Oxford House, Toynbee Hall, by Miss Octavia Hill and her lady workers, with almost innumerable other agencies in London, or than that done by the so-called "Sanitary Association" of Manchester, which, in fact, includes or affiliates other invaluable bodies, such as "The Ladies' Public Health Society," "The Citizens' Committee for Improving the Dwellings and Surroundings of the People," and many more; but that for which in Manchester, at least, they all cry out is the co-operation of an educated public opinion. Until the public have been educated to know how serious is the case with which we have to deal, and how important as a national question it is, we shall be confronted with the terrible words of Dr. Bostock Hill, the Professor of Hygiene at Birmingham University, who probably knows more than any man in the kingdom of the question as it affects the whole land: "All the work hitherto accomplished has practically done nothing to reduce the terrible waste of infant life, the veritable slaughter of the innocents, which annually takes place, with the ever-to-be-remembered sequence that those who survive are represented, and truly represented, by the anæmic 11,000 of Manchester."'

After eleven months of labour the Interdepartmental Committee reported in August, 1904, that there was no evidence of progressive deterioration among the people; that the Army Medical returns showed, not that the whole population had deteriorated, but that the army now drew its recruits from a lower stratum; that in this stratum physical inefficiency was rampant, and was due to conditions which could be removed; and that from a variety of causes, of which one of the chief is the ignorance of parents, 'the sacrifice of infant life is enormous.'

As an immediate outcome of the report, Maurice joined with Bishop Boyd Carpenter (then Bishop of Ripon), Sir Lauder Brunton, and Professor Howard Marsh (now Master of Downing), in forming the National League for Physical Education and Improvement, the objects of which are, not to start any fresh agency, but to co-ordinate existing effort throughout the country, and to carry out the third recommendation of the committee, that 'complacent optimism and administrative indifference must be attacked and overcome, and a large-hearted sentiment of public interest take the place of timorous counsels and sectional prejudice.'

The conception of this League had originated with Sir Lauder Brunton some three years before. He had ungrudgingly devoted much time and money to the promotion of an agency whose object should be to deal in a logical and broad-minded manner with the problem of national health in all its aspects. He had succeeded in interesting the Bishop of Ripon, Lord Haldane, Sir Henry Craik, Sir James Crichton-Browne, and many representative members of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and of the Incorporated Society of Medical Officers of Health, in the subject. By the time, therefore, that Maurice had drawn the attention of Parliament and of the Public Departments to the importance of the question from the point of view of military efficiency, the ground had been well prepared. The



League was successfully inaugurated at the Mansion House in June, 1905.

Into this work Maurice threw himself with his usual energy, and he was constantly occupied in working, writing, and speaking, on behalf of the League until his health broke down. As one branch of this work, he interested himself in the foundation and development of the St. Francis Hospital for Infants, which was started in Denning Road, Hampstead, as a result of his inquiry, to investigate and combat the causes of infantile mortality. In this work, too, he was engaged actively until he was incapacitated by illness.

On the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, Maurice resumed his practice of supplying running commentaries on current military operations, and these on this occasion appeared mainly in the *Daily Telegraph*. He had continued the close study of the military power of Russia which he had begun when in the Intelligence Department in 1876, and had always followed with the closest attention the developments of the Eastern Question. He was therefore one of the few who anticipated from the first the success of the Japanese, and both his criticisms of the operations and suggestions as to their probable development were marked by the same knowledge and sound judgment as had characterized his work during the Chino-Japanese and South African Wars.

He was not destined to be left long without official employment. His friend Colonel Henderson, who had been appointed to compile the official history of the Boer War, was already ill when he went out to South Africa, and the campaign had permanently affected his health. He died in March, 1903, to the regret of all who had the higher training of the army at heart. Colonel Henderson had been appointed official historian in the autumn of 1900, soon after he was invalided home from South Africa. The soldier was then paramount, and Lord Roberts' wishes law. Henderson was accordingly given a free hand, and had planned a history which should at once interest the public and make clear to

the average citizen the national as well as the purely military lessons of our successes and failures. Arrangements were made to place the production of the work in the hands of a private firm of publishers, and an agent was engaged to make the history known. Further, it was decided to bring the book out in a style which was in itself a revolutionary change from the uninviting red-bound publications favoured by the Stationery Office. Henderson had consulted Maurice on the plan and scope of the work, and how completely the ideas of the two men were in agreement will be gathered from the views which Maurice had expressed eleven years before on the rôle of an English official historian.\* In the year 1903, however, the soldier was no longer master of the situation; the politician was once more in a position to dictate terms. Maurice wrote in April, 1903, on being asked to undertake the editorship :

‘The offer was couched in what were to me personally very flattering terms. Yet, when I first received the conditions on which I was to edit the history, I felt very much like Hamlet must have done at the time when he opened the letters of the King of Denmark to the King of England. They propose to consign me to penal servitude for life, and to the more modern punishment to add the ancient one, that I am to spend my time with a hornets nest about my ears, trampling a bottomless bog in pursuit of an unapproachable bauble. Naturally, I prefer to retain my freedom.’

On being pressed to reconsider his decision, he proposed that the general lines of Henderson’s plans should be followed, and that sufficient additional staff should be provided to insure that the work could be brought out before the public had ceased to concern itself about the war. Failing this increase, he suggested that the history should be abandoned. He also stipulated that he should be permitted to finish the literary work, such as the Diary of Sir John Moore, to which he was already committed. On obtaining a provisional

\* See p. 56.

acceptance of these proposals, Maurice began work in July, 1903, and proceeded to edit and complete the first volume, on which Henderson had made considerable progress. In the meantime Mr. Arnold Forster succeeded Mr. Brodrick, and the Army Council took the place of Lord Roberts. Under the new régime it was decided that the whole of Henderson's volume was unsuitable, that Maurice should instead write two or three introductory chapters, and that the general lines of the history should follow those of the German official history of 1870-71. Maurice still had hopes that the book could be completed in time and in a manner to appeal to the general public. His first volume was ready for submission to the authorities in 1904. In the spring of the following year he was informed that his introductory chapters were no more suitable than Henderson's, and that all political and descriptive matter of any kind was to be omitted. The following letter which he wrote to a friend in the War Office expresses his views on this decision :

' The cancelling of the first three chapters is a minor matter, because there will be no difficulty in simply saying that, as the circumstances which led up to the war have been the subject of much controversy, it has been decided that no explanation of these should be given. But I frankly do not understand the prohibition of all political and descriptive matter.

' At the time when I was appointed to take up the work left behind him by Colonel Henderson, it was expressly on the knowledge of what I had previously done in this matter that I was selected. Now, both in learning, in teaching, and in writing, military history, it has always been my contention that it is absolutely useless and worthless except in so far as it places the man who reads it in the position of those whose actions he is studying, and therefore enables him to profit by their experience, and to learn both from their failures, their misfortunes, and their successes. In order to do this, he must know all the motives which deter-



mined their decisions, and all the circumstances in which they acted. As I say, when I first took up the work it was with the understanding that those who appointed me shared this view with me and trusted me to carry it out. I have done my best, by submitting the draft to all those who were engaged in the several actions and could give me valuable evidence about them, to ascertain the facts, after these had been as far as possible collated from the vast mass of documents at my disposal.

‘ Now, as to all that concerns the larger features of the war, whether Sir Redvers Buller’s motives, Sir William Butler’s, Sir George White’s, or those of any others, and whether the question be the choice of the line of operations and of the plan of campaign, or the distribution of the troops, or very numerous other points, such as Sir Redvers’ own movements, Lord Methuen’s march on Kimberley, and the Stormberg operations, the explanations that are given me and the determining motives, as historically they evidently were, involve certain elements that may be called “ political.” I am very anxious to know whether I am to understand the word in this sense, or whether it only refers to the question with which the first three chapters dealt, which may in a different sense be considered to involve points which have become the subject of party political controversy.

‘ According to a possible meaning of the word, I should be debarred from explaining the true causes of all the conditions under which the war opened, I should falsify the whole history of the sequence of events, and, not being able to put the reader in a position to see with the eyes of any of the commanders, I should, according to the principle I have explained as determining the value of military history, produce something that would be absolutely useless and valueless.

‘ That this is no exaggerated statement you will see at once when I point out that the question of the selection of a line of operations lay between Natal and the Orange

Free State. This could not be determined till it was known whether the Free State would join the Transvaal in its declaration of war. Again, from a purely military point of view, the scattering of detachments of the small army which was in the colonies at first would have been ridiculous. Yet it was entirely wise and right, because these small parties deprived the Boers of the opportunity to stir up disaffection and to arm their sympathizers in the old colony.

' The occupation of Ladysmith and Dundee was determined by the necessity for protecting the loyal and awing the disaffected. The moving of Lord Methuen's column simultaneously with the Natal and Stormberg operations was due to the importance of the De Beers mines and to the presence there of Mr. Rhodes. The Stormberg operations were mainly carried on in order to stop the Boers from enlisting recruits in those regions.

' Thus, all the military operations are inextricably interwoven with what may possibly be meant by "political" considerations. Yet by what possibility can the truth be told if these which I have named and others like them are ignored?

' Apart from this, though connected with it, is the nature of the criticism to which my work is to be submitted. Having already, as you know, written one official history, I took for granted that it would be necessary for me to submit the proof to the several offices. But, according to the precedent with which I was familiar, this was only in order to make sure that in dealing with very confidential documents I had put in nothing which it might be inadvisable to publish. I was quite unprepared for the fact that, after I and a large staff had been engaged in investigating the facts, the detailed objections to my work would take the form of complaints that the history, which according to all the best evidence I could obtain, citation of which was given very lavishly in the notes, I believed to be accurate, was not in conformity with the previous impressions about the facts of the particular person who looked it over. Thus,

one gentleman in particular told me expressly that there was nothing in it that could be in the least objectionable from the office point of view. He objected to my speaking of the British Empire as "peace-loving." He contemptuously said that he had never before heard the names of Louis XIV. and of Alva coupled together. This was because I had cited the undoubted historical fact, that just as the cruelties of Alva sent Dutchmen to Africa, so the atrocities committed during the persecutions which followed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes sent Frenchmen there. I have very carefully examined that story both on the spot in Paris and in England. He has evidently an average man's ignorance of it. If I am to take this as a specimen of the principles on which the history is to be corrected and ultimately published, it is not worth while to go to the expense of employing a carefully selected body of writers to investigate the truth. A history written so as to conform to the average popular impressions can be very quickly and cheaply produced. It will have no possible value for anyone.'

Maurice again wished for a time to throw up his task, but feeling that by then so much public money had been expended, and so much labour devoted to the work by his staff, he decided that he could not in honour do this. The first volume was accordingly published in 1906, and the second a year later. He was engaged upon the third when his health broke down and he was obliged to abandon all work.

While far from feeling that the history, as a record of the events of the war, was unsatisfactory, he was convinced to the last that in the circumstances in which it appeared, and under the conditions imposed upon him, it could have little educative effect, and therefore could bring no adequate return for the money and labour expended on it. He held, in fact, that no compromise was possible between a history written in such a way and produced in time to instruct



public opinion, and the work of a permanent and well-equipped history section acting as the mouthpiece of a General Staff, with definite views of what it wanted to teach.

In his last years Maurice received two honours which gave him great pleasure. In September, 1906, he was made Colonel Commandant of the Royal Artillery, and in May, 1907, he was awarded by the Council of the United Service Institution the Chesney Memorial Gold Medal in recognition of his distinguished services to military literature. At that time the medal had only been previously awarded to Captain Mahan.

During his long illness Maurice was able to watch with pleasure and interest the effect of the recent introduction of many of the reforms which he had spent much of his life in advocating. He welcomed the good results which followed the decentralization of War Office business, the formation of a General Staff, the growth of co-operation between the army and navy, the grouping of the army in fighting formations, trained and staffed in peace by the men who would serve with them in war, the earnest attempts to provide us with second-line troops adequate for home defence ; in all these he saw signs of steady and satisfactory progress, but perhaps nothing gave him greater pleasure than the frank recognition of our interest in maintaining the balance of power in Europe.

The one recent change in military organization for which he had no good word was the abolition of the office of Commander-in-Chief. Of this he wrote :

‘ From the days of Moses and old Jethro downwards there has always been danger lest there should be such an accumulation of work thrown upon the head of any great organization that the wise observer must declare : “ The thing that thou doest is not good . . . for this thing is too heavy for thee ; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.” But there are two remedies possible : one, old Jethro’s, which, rightly interpreted, has since always commended itself to

the experience of mankind ; the other, that of which the condemnation can hardly be better put than in these words of Macaulay : “ Armies have triumphed under leaders who possessed no very efficient qualifications, but what army commanded by a debating club ever escaped discomfiture and disgrace ?” ’\*

After close on four years of helplessness, borne with a patience which was not the least gallant action in a life with its full share of brave deeds, Maurice died on January 11, 1912.

\* Macaulay’s ‘ History of England,’ vol. i., p. 556.

PART II

ESSAYS ON DISCIPLINE AND  
NATIONAL EFFICIENCY

BY THE LATE MAJOR-GENERAL SIR F. MAURICE





## PART II

# DISCIPLINE AND NATIONAL EFFICIENCY

### I

#### *THE ZEITGEIST UNDER DRILL*

An Inquiry into Certain Effects likely to be produced on Modern  
Thought by 'Universal Service.'

THE tremendous fact of our time, that all the most civilized nations of the old continent of Europe are at present engaged, as the great function of life, in military training, seems to me a phenomenon which may be worth considering from the civilian's as well as the soldier's point of view. When many millions of men—literally, so far as their virile population is concerned, at least four whole nations, exclusive of Russia—are being subjected throughout the best years of their life to a certain form of training, to a certain education, it is scarcely possible that that fact should not have some effect on the thought of mankind, on the philosophy of mankind. Think of it for a moment. It is not possible, or hardly possible, that, to take those two nations alone, any French or German philosopher of the future, any poet or historian, unless he is seriously deformed or in some way physically incapable, should escape passing through the mill. Our military training has at least one element in it which has been recognized by philosophers. It is very potent in its influence. It is designed not only to mould men's bodies, which notoriously it does pretty

effectually, but also to mould their characters, their minds. Its potency, I say, in that respect has been always recognized. Will the philosophers of the future, those of the two nations who in modern times have usually been the guides of philosophy, escape its influence?

Nor is that the only question. We have been taught by our own philosophers to have a profound respect for, to believe in the power of, the *Zeitgeist*—the spirit of the times. When all the educated classes, all the lawyers, all the scientific men, all the doctors, all the literary men, of France and Germany, have passed through the military mill, will the *Zeitgeist* escape its influence? Nay, to touch on a subject of even higher interest, will worship, will religion, escape its influence?

I fear that, if I have at all succeeded in making clear the importance of the subject from this point of view, the first effect of my words will be to produce a feeling of mere horror. Nor can I be surprised at it. Once before at least in the history of the world the effect on the minds of men of a military discipline intruded itself forcibly into the history of morals and religion. When the great protest of mankind against obscurantism, and in behalf of conscience, of which Luther was the embodiment, had for the time spent its force, the inevitable reaction found its embodiment in a soldier. Loyola imported into the great society which he founded the ideas of the military discipline of his day. No one will deny the power which he exercised over the minds of his followers, over their disciples, and through them on the world. If the influence of military discipline on the minds of men in Germany, Austria, France, and Italy, is likely to be the same as it was on Loyola, the Jesuits and their disciples, can anything more appalling be imagined than that this influence should become paramount in Europe in the twentieth century? If that be so, and if there be a Ruler of the World who determines the course of history, what kind of a ruler can He be? If, therefore, I am able to show conclusively that the kind of influence exercised by



modern military training is very different, I hope I shall not seem to write as a lover of the horrors of war or as an advocate of militarism. I think, at all events, that it cannot be amiss for any man, the most devoted to peace at any price, to understand something of the influences under which, omitting from the military reckoning the legions of Russia, at least eight millions of the most civilized of mankind are growing up. If I am able to give some evidences that the influence is a more wholesome one than they have had reason to suppose, they surely need not object to have the fact laid before them. It cannot be healthy for any of us, merely from a misconception of the facts, to think scorn of others. That is—however many men indulge in it—the attitude of mind of Little Pedlington.

I hope in what I shall say to 'nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.' I shall speak only of facts certainly true, and known to a whole continent, though they have, I find, escaped notice among us, because our guardian seas have allowed us to avoid paying attention to them. I cannot help having a secret feeling that One who 'shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will,' has been laying rough hands upon that same potent Zeitgeist, and has been in a very strange way bending him to do His bidding. But of that I shall have more to say by-and-by. Meantime I do not think that, from the point of view of which I speak, it will be uninteresting to consider certain changes which have occurred in the very essence of military training as to its tendency to mould the characters of men. I propose, then, first to describe certain conditions peculiar to the modern training of armies as compared with the past. Afterwards I propose to look at certain phases of modern thought, and to consider whether there is any strange analogy between the questions with which men under very different conditions and unknown to each other have been concerned.

In the first place, apart from the nature of modern military discipline itself, of which I shall have to say a good deal presently, I must notice two very striking phenomena which

have largely affected it—one in Germany, the other in Italy. As a rule the causes which historians have assigned for war in the past, and for the keeping up of armies in peace-time, have been dynastic ambition, quarrels between rulers, misunderstandings between nations, and generally whatsoever is comprised in the word Discord and is most opposed to Unity. Now, in Germany if you ask the most liberal statesman—indeed, if you inquire of almost any men at all who look beneath the surface of things—you will find that, however much some of them may dislike the methods by which German unity was brought about, they will all agree that the idea which lay at the bottom of all the military policy of late years was the idea of German unity. Nor, I think, if pressed home, do many of them now dispute the accuracy of the following sentence which I take from that purely military record, 'The Prussian Official History of the War of 1866':

'A deep inclination towards unity was current in the whole German nation, but for the sake of unity neither were the princes prepared to sacrifice their rights nor the people their peculiarities.'

Under the influence of the powerful will of a great statesman, the unity which was the heart-felt wish of the mass of the people was attained. It was attained at first by the war of 1866. It was cemented by the common military training which during peace time preceded the great war of 1870, and it was solidified by the common patriotic sacrifices in which all Germans joined during that struggle. Thus, the army and the military training connected with it became for the German people alike the cause and the symbol of that national union which was the fulfilment of their patriotic aspiration. It would hardly in the nature of things be possible that such a fact should not profoundly modify the character of military training itself as compared with that of armies held together, say, as those of Wallenstein, of Frederick or Napoleon, were—chiefly by the power of the great leader himself.

The case of Italy is even more remarkable. For the union of Italy was not, so far as war is concerned, achieved by the army so much as by the Garibaldean volunteers and the French. The singular feature of the case of Italy is that statesmen of all parties are agreed in maintaining the Italian army not so much, not nearly so much, for the safety of the country, as in order to produce a genuine national unity by the peace training which it afforded. Their words are so remarkable that I think the following extract may best speak for itself. I quote from a book written by an Austrian military attaché, General Baron Haymerlé, in which he sums up the views of a number of Italian statesmen :

‘ What knowledge had the Calabrian of the Lombard, the Sicilian of the Piedmontese, the native of the Basilicate of the Tuscan ? How could the rural population—with no horizon but their daily labours—appreciate the new régime, which pitilessly deprived them of their modest savings, and seized their sons for the service of a stranger King, reproached on every side for having made the Pope a prisoner, despoiled the Church, and brought down on himself the malediction of all good Catholics. . . .

‘ Compulsory military service could alone lead rapidly to the desired ends, bringing each day into immediate contact races absolutely unknown to each other, and inculcating the idea of a great national family stretching from north to south. It was felt that a severe discipline would create a sentiment of duty in general, and of duty towards King and country in particular, that the civilizing regularity of military life would bring even the most uncultured recruit from the mountains of Calabria to comprehend the scope of the results obtained, and to imbue his compatriots with the idea engrafted in himself. Thus by many thousand voices the idea of a great State of which every one formed a unit permeated rapidly among the lower social strata—the idea of a powerful community including every Italian—and by these means the work of government was made much



easier. The nation and the army exercise on each other a reciprocal influence, the happy effects of which are everywhere felt, and to-day the army has become the most popular institution of Italy—a matter apart from all the varying vicissitudes of party strife' ('*Italicae Res*').\*

I think that in each of those instances it will be seen that the training connected with the army has been something very different from any class militarism, that it has associated itself with the most vigorous impulses of national life.

But meantime, for all armies and quite apart from all special German or Italian circumstances, the whole conditions of war have been changing. The clatter and noise of what nearly concerns ourselves sounds so loud in our ears that it is difficult to persuade ourselves that all men have not heard it or known something of it. The new spirit has been working now for at least thirty years. The whole of our military training has been affected by it. I was under the impression that I should be repeating a ten-times-told tale if I did more than allude to it. But I thought it prudent, before I published my argument, to make experiments as to the popular English knowledge of these things. I found not only that some very intelligent and cultivated friends to whom I spoke in London did not know them, but that they were so strange to them, so contrary to their ideas of military life, that I could not make them believe that what I said was true. I must therefore state fully facts familiar enough to those who have cared to study them.

I think I may assume that most Englishmen have, at some time or other, seen a number of soldiers standing shoulder to shoulder in a long line of two ranks one behind the other. They know that the formation in which our infantry soldiers so stand is the famous old British 'line.' They will also have seen at some time or other a body of men row behind row, several rows deep. That we call a 'column.'

\* I quote from the translation given in '*Military Italy*,' pp. 8, 9. By Charles Martel. London: Macmillan and Co., 1884.

Sometimes the column is wider than at others, and sometimes the rows are closer, sometimes farther apart. Obviously, a body of men comparatively few in front, and occupying in that way very little space, may make up by the increased number of rows the same body of men that were before standing in two ranks in line. It is clear also that this column, having a small front, can move down narrow roads when the wide line cannot. Besides, for long marches it is very difficult for a line, even on open ground, to keep well together, whereas a column can always do that much more easily.

Now, in the Duke of Wellington's days, and always, I may say, up to the great war between France and Germany in 1870, the chief 'drill' that soldiers had to learn was to get from the line in which all their weapons could be used together, whether bayonets or firearms, into these long columns in which they could march more easily than in the line; and then for fighting to get back from the columns into the line. For large bodies of men to do that quickly and regularly takes a great deal of practice.

But all that was necessary was that the men should do exactly what they were told at the moment when they were told it. In order that a general should be able to give such orders as would make all his army work together in this kind of way, it was divided up into parts under different under-generals, and these parts were again divided into others under colonels, and these into others under captains. By experiments carefully made, it was gradually found out what was the shortest and best way in which each part of the army could move so as to do what the general wanted. Books, known as 'drill-books,' were printed, which told the colonel exactly how he was to move his regiment when he received a certain command from the general next above him. The drill-book, in fact, told him the exact words the general would use, and what the exact words were that he was to use when he heard these words from the general. Then, again, the drill-book told the majors, the captains, and the

subalterns, what exactly they were to do and say when they heard the colonel's words. The privates and the officers selected from among themselves, whom we call 'non-commissioned officers'—sergeant-majors, sergeants, corporals—were trained to know exactly how they were to move when they received their captain's or colonel's word of command.

Thus, when once the general had used the first words of command named in the drill-book, every one else knew what exactly they were to say and to do. There could be no variation. The general's words fixed everything. There were, however, a great many movements that were laid down in the drill-book. Men could be moved about in a great many different ways, only always, as soon as the officer who had to set the machine in motion, whether he were colonel, general, or captain, had used certain regulating words, every one else was bound to know what to say and do. To make men and officers accurate in carrying out the drill-book regulations took a great deal of practice, and this practice was called 'drill.' The officer who was moving about the troops required to know the drill-book well, and also wanted to know how to apply the movements named in it to different circumstances. Still, even for him there was not much variety beyond a well-defined point. All below him required only to practise until they mechanically acted with exact precision when they heard certain words. They were only perfect when they had no occasion on the parade-ground, and for the purpose of drill, to exercise original thought at all. They never for drill purposes had the least occasion to judge for themselves what to do. The one duty of the soldier was to obey, and as long as he was acting in line or column he could hardly obey too mechanically, with too little thought.

Always, however, even under the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsula, there was one class of soldiers who were trained under a different system. What was called the Light Division in the Peninsula was formed of men who were trained in every way to use their intelligence and to think. Instead of fighting shoulder to shoulder in line, they were trained to



work in small parties, to know what they were doing, to work together, to co-operate with one another, and though obedience was not less necessary for them than for others, it was an intelligent obedience that was required of them.

Well, things remained pretty much in that condition with all armies till the war between Germany and France in 1870. A few, a very few indeed, who with sharp eyes watched events as they occurred, had seen four years earlier very dimly what was going to happen. But it was the war of 1870 that opened the eyes of all of us ; it opened the eyes of the Germans as much as of anyone else. They had foreseen almost as little as any of us what was forced on them by that war. For how was it forced on them ? The answer is a very remarkable one, and I am most anxious that it and all the problems that it raises should be carefully weighed and considered. Men working quietly in their laboratories had gone on making inventions. Most of them were just like the rest of us, utterly ignorant of what other men not in laboratories were doing or thinking about. Not one of them had the slightest notion of the nature of the change which his own work was going to bring about. But they set themselves to perfect weapons ; they enormously increased the distance to which the great guns of the artillery could throw their shells, and the number of shells that could be thrown in a given time ; they enormously increased the distance at which infantrymen could strike any object with their smaller firearms. The invention, more particularly of the breech-loading rifle, vastly increased the rapidity with which infantrymen could fire. The general effect was to make the fire delivered by a modern army so deadly that the Prussian generals very soon saw that those carefully-prepared formations in which soldiers had been trained had ceased to be possible. All that elaborate drill of the past was clean swept away by big gun and breech-loader. What followed ? The Germans found that, instead of trusting to that mechanical precision of strictly regulated movement and that mechanical obedience which they had up to their

entry into the campaign practised as much as any other nation, they must trust to a very different thing.

Their ranks were full of men taken from all classes of society. The conditions of universal service supplied them with that advantage. Furthermore, though they had gone on trusting to rigid drill such as I have described, they had every year also practised their men in working together at great manœuvres as nearly resembling war as possible. There they had learnt to know one another, to trust one another. They had learnt not merely to be able to carry out a prescribed order which regulated the exact movement of their limbs, they had learnt to understand the meaning of an order, to understand the mind of the man who gave the order. They had been accustomed to apply their minds intelligently to the task before them. They had also learnt that all their power as an army depended on united action. Therefore in such circumstances, though it was as necessary as before to secure obedience, it became possible to obtain it in a very different way from that of the days of Frederick's father, the great drill-master and bully of Europe. The men themselves, led especially by the example of the more educated and intelligent among them, learnt to look upon military obedience as a thing desirable in itself, as a thing on which their power of united action depended. They had learnt to understand that the man who gave the order was not exercising some arbitrary authority, but was their comrade and friend, assisting them by his very authority in the task at which they, too, were aiming. The mimic struggles against rival corps, in which all took the keenest interest, the subsequent conversations in the barrack-room, all contributed to this end. Of course, in using single definite sentences to express my meaning I do not intend to imply that these results were perfectly attained. The very fact that they are human and not mechanical results implies imperfection. But the aim was an incomparably higher one than the aim of the mechanical drill movement. It was the degree of perfection that they had actually attained

prior to the war of 1870, in this cultivated intelligence, that gave them their great moral ascendancy over the French.

But I fear lest I shall seem to those who are not familiar with this story to be painting from my own imagination, to be trying to put a specious appearance upon a brutal fact. Let me quote from an author who is not a soldier, but a man whose 'Sedan: The Downfall of the Second Empire,' is one of the very best short English accounts of it that we have. Mr. Hooper, whilst giving full credit to the absolute genuineness and thoroughness of the work of the German staff, which insured that 'each battery, squadron, and battalion, had its full complement of men,' instead of being, as the French batteries, squadrons, and battalions, were, only complete on paper, thus describes the other causes which led to victory :

'The Germans gained confidence at every step they took towards the frontier, not only because they were animated by a formidable patriotic spirit and were eager for battle with their ancient foes . . . but because they were intensely proud of an almost perfect war apparatus in which each officer and soldier was able, so solid yet elastic was the system of training, to harmonize obedience to orders with, when the need arose, discretionary independent action.' \*

Before very long there poured from the German press the reports of eyewitnesses, the criticisms of able soldiers. The Germans, where they had made mistakes, had the power and wisdom to learn from their mistakes.

Very soon afterwards it happened to fall to my lot to have to draw attention to the nature of the changes which were forced upon all armies, and particularly on our own, by the events of the war and by the lessons which the most war-tried soldiers in Europe had deduced from it. I venture to quote a few sentences of what I wrote then : first, because, having been written more than thirty years ago, they cannot be

\* 'Sedan: The Downfall of the Second Empire.' London: G. Bell and Sons, 1887, p. 84.



suspected of having been prepared for the purpose of my present argument ; second, because they were deduced from the unanimous evidence of all the eyewitnesses of the struggle, and if I had to epitomize that now I should hardly change them ; thirdly, because, having been written for soldiers, they represent the views which we, who have to speak to soldiers about their own duties, are continually now enforcing, so that I can only ask my non-military readers to accept on our evidence the fact that that is the present aim and necessity of the most effective military training and discipline :

‘ The free action of every rank, from the general to the private, must be fully developed—not in order that each rank may interfere with and claim independence from the rank above it, but in order that each may more effectually co-operate with, and carry out the work assigned by, that immediately superior to it. All training must tend to develop the qualities which are essential to such a manner of action. The habit of command must cease to be the habit of exact prescription.’ \*

I hope I have made the meaning of that phrase clear by what I have said about the prescribed forms of the drill-book : ‘ The habit of command must cease to be the habit of exact prescription and become the habit of clear instruction ’—that is, of conveying to the mind of the soldier the mind of the commander. ‘ Men must be constantly accustomed to act under orders which they will have to interpret according to circumstances ; otherwise, when they find themselves under the necessity of deciding, they will think it essential to decide absolutely for themselves, instead of deciding how they can best carry out the views of those who command them. Unity or harmony of action will be more essential than ever, but it must be arrived at by a thorough appreciation of the spirit rather than by a strict adherence to the letter.’ \*

\* ‘ The System of Field Manœuvres best adapted for enabling our Troops to meet a Continental Army.’ William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1872, pp. 34, 35.

Perhaps I have now said enough to show that the training which the millions of the Continent are undergoing is no mere routine designed to crush their minds into a dull submission to regulation ; but that, though its purpose is to train each man to a sense of duty and to personal sacrifices of all kinds for the sake of national safety, yet that to it the development of the full intelligence and mind of the man is as essential as the training of his body. ' A sound mind in a sound body ' is necessary as the starting-point, and the whole vigour of a severe physical and moral discipline is devoted to develop it.

Mr. Goschen, in the inaugural lecture which he delivered as Rector of the University of Aberdeen, declared that an education was valuable or not in proportion as it developed intellectual interest and love of intelligent work. I have shown that the military education to which the Germans subject the entire youth of their nation is directed towards developing to the fullest possible extent the intelligence, the intelligent interest in their work, of every man submitted to it. Whether that military training, of the potency of which I have already spoken, has had some share in that special development of general intelligence among Germans of which Mr. Goschen also spoke is a point of some importance ; but it is not one on which I can afford space to dwell under any other aspect than that which concerns my immediate subject. The training which a man gets from the time that he is twenty years of age till he is twenty-three can hardly fail to affect the intelligence with which he engages in any pursuit in which he is afterwards employed.

But I am bound to admit that it is not to the development of intelligence alone that the German military training is directed. In every one of their modern studies of the necessary conditions of training they insist on the fact that, in order to get the man they want, they must develop the whole moral worth of him—that his value and efficiency for their purpose will depend on their developing him both physically, mentally, and morally, to the full stature of a

man. I have shown already that the Italian statesmen, seeking to make men of the Neapolitan lazzaroni and the former bandits, turned as their only hope to military training to teach the conception of national duty, of duty as duty, to bring these men to mutual trust in one another, to a readiness for personal self-sacrifice, if necessary, of their lives for one another and for Italy, to the conception of order, to cleanliness, to the understanding of their place and function in a great national work.

I never quite understood in which of two senses a certain expression of the old political economists, that a nation could not afford to keep more than a named proportion of its population 'in arms and idleness,' was to be understood. I do not know whether it meant that, one portion being in idleness and the other in arms, the numbers were to be arrived at by adding these together, or whether it was assumed that those who were kept in arms were also in idleness. I think, at all events, that in England the universal assumption is that a soldier's life is necessarily an idle one. I should be sorry to deny that a tradition of idleness connected with the teetotum drill of which I have spoken still hangs about our own army. But of this I am sure, that on almost every night of his life during his two or three years' training the Prussian soldier goes to bed having done during the day just about as much work as he was physically capable of doing without injury to his future power of work. He has had all his faculties kept on the stretch by men whose business it is to keep him steadily up to the collar.

Whether, when that discipline has been applied to all the men from the ploughs, the looms, and the factories, of an entire nation, the effect may not be to develop in them in after-life a power of healthful, intelligent work of a kind that it is not easy to compete with, is a question worth considering. Whether the close association of all classes in an entirely unselfish patriotic duty may not have its value ought, perhaps, also to be considered as well as whether



the influence of the higher cultivation upon the lower may not have its effect upon the general intelligence of a nation.

But it does not contribute, unless it be in these indirect ways, to the great object of our older political economists, the accumulation of the wealth of nations. Not only was the German nation, the Prussian more especially, poor at the time when it conquered France—it then boasted its poverty. I remember having reported to me—I think by my father—a long time ago, a speech made by a German who had spent many years among us, one who in many respects loved our nation well. After speaking with enthusiasm of much that he had seen and known here, he nevertheless finished up with the words: 'But, thank God, I was born in a poor country!'

That was the tone, also, of their military writers of the victorious era, one of the most important of them using almost the same expression as to the army that I have already quoted as to the nation: 'Thank God that all their officers are as poor as church mice!' As regards the civil part of the population, that condition is, however, now undergoing a rapid change.\*

I do not think that a nation, any more than a single man, has any right to repudiate the position in which it finds itself placed. Ours is a wealthy, not a poor nation; but though I should be sorry that we should ignore the responsibilities which our condition involves, I think we cannot help feeling that there is something stately and noble about this deliberate acceptance of the circumstances and the discomforts of a proud poverty. At all events, to limit myself to what I started with, it seems to me that the whole represents a picture worth looking at and wondering what we ought to think about it. One almost includes in that wonder the doubt what the effect on Germany of the development of wealth, which has of late been rapid, may be.\*

\* This paper was originally prepared in 1888. I introduced the two final sentences of each of these paragraphs in 1900. The change in the twelve years is worth noting.

So much for the strictly military side of the question. Now let us turn to the other part of my subject.

I have suggested that the training, of which I have now given some slight sketch, can hardly fail hereafter to affect thought in regions far removed from military life. I instanced the immense effect which the military training of his day exercised upon the mind of Loyola, and through him upon almost every nation upon earth.

We are all familiar with the fact that

The Æthiop gods have Æthiop lips,  
Brown cheeks and woolly hair ;  
The Grecian gods are like the Greeks,  
As keen-eyed, cold, and fair ;

and I might easily, from such experience as a somewhat varied service has given me, tell how in Ashantee, to quote the words of a despatch of Lord Wolseley's, we found that ' their capital was a charnel-house, their religion a combination of cruelty and treachery, their policy the natural outcome of their religion ' ; how you cannot help feeling all the time that you are in Egypt that a nation of slaves naturally worships the man in the clouds who has a whip in his hands ; and how in each and all of these instances the popular faith, the popular ideal as represented in the object of worship, affects character and custom, and how, on the other hand, whatever affects character and custom modifies the object of worship, the ideal which becomes the standard of character.

Mr. Matthew Arnold, in one of his lectures, said of the *Zeitgeist* : ' The Spirit of Time is a personage for whose operations I have the greatest respect ; whatever he does is, in my opinion, of the greatest effect.' In a very striking passage, noticing the lecture in which that sentence occurs, the late Mr. R. H. Hutton replied by comparing the Time-Spirit to the Will-o'-the-wisp of the Brocken in Goethe's ' Faust.' Quoting the famous passage in Bunyan's ' Pilgrim's Progress ' which refers to the two giants, Pope and Pagan, he says :

'The Zeitgeist breathed upon Bunyan, and made him believe that Paganism was dead for ever, and that the Papacy was in its dotage. It breathes upon us in the nineteenth century; and while some of its children rub their eyes and find that Giant Pope is the true sponsor for revelation after all, others rub their eyes and find that Giant Pagan is still in his youth; that there is indeed no revelation, and that Christianity, so far as it is true at all, is a truth of human nature, not of theology.'\*

If, then, there is any truth in the point which I urged at the beginning of this paper, that when the modern drill-master gets hold of the philosophers he is likely to set the Zeitgeist dancing in an unexpected way, it becomes of some interest to inquire to what tune will the Zeitgeist then be likely to dance?

Though the philosophers have not hitherto taken the modern drill-sergeant into account, has anyone else done so? If there is any relation between the facts I have mentioned and the questions which have long been debated in the closets of scientific men and of philosophers, those which have now descended into the streets, which are discussed in all drawing-rooms, in every magazine, in every weekly, almost every daily, newspaper, which so absorb attention that Mr. Darwin's biography, of which the great interest centres on them, drove out of circulation almost every other book on Mudie's shelves, though that biography runs to three volumes, while to achieve an immense success our novelists and romancers must deal chiefly with some such problems.

If I venture to assert that there is, and that the relation is a curiously close one, I hope that my readers will not at once reject that view because it seems unlikely that any influence should be exerted on those great questions by the tramping soldiers of modern armies and by what has appeared to them as a merely deplorable fact. Whatever else science

\* 'Modern Guides of English Thought in Matters of Faith.'  
R. H. Hutton. Macmillan and Co., 1887.



has taught us about the management of the world, this much at least is certain, that we cannot judge of what we shall find to be most potent in it from appearances or from guess. In a world which, for thousands upon thousands of years, man supposed to be the centre of the universe, and finds upon more careful investigation to be only an insignificant satellite of one among countless suns, it may be necessary to ignore appearances if we would arrive at truth. We are in a world where man for centuries untold admired the power of the elephant, the lion, and the tiger, and trampled under foot the despised worm. We have comparatively lately learnt that, while the greater beasts have left only their carcasses to enrich the soil, the worm has been silently changing the whole character of the earth. We have trembled before the power of earthquakes and catastrophes, which, as we might well have supposed, had determined the features of our mountains and our valleys. The quiet work of a few patient observers has taught us to believe that not these, but the gentle rain and the smoothly flowing water, have been the great agents of change. It is almost as though there was some great irony which lay behind the working of the universe, as though it were governed by One who rejoiced to employ the most unlikely agents to effect each special purpose. After all, in that respect science confirms a view expressed many years before any of these facts were discovered, 'that weak things are chosen to confound things which are mighty, and base things, and things that are despised, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are,' so that, as, according to the same view, 'foolish things have been chosen to confound the wise,' it may happen that while armies have failed just where their masters thought them strong, in coercing men's minds by terror and force, so in those things in which they are despised and altogether foolish their power may be acting hereafter in unexpected fashion.

Many years ago the man who then sat in the chair of Sir William Hamilton, Professor Fraser, thus summed up

the problems of the time as they touched upon the highest range of human thought :

‘ The theological struggle of this age, in all its more important phases, turns upon the philosophical problem of the limits of knowledge and the true theory of human ignorance.’

His words were on both sides accepted as true by combatants who were at that time battling over questions which would have seemed to most men to be about as likely to affect them as the proceedings and methods of Prussian soldiers.

In those days\* the battle between rival exponents of truth, who both adhered in full to what they believed to be the Christian faith, raged over this question : ‘ Has it been the purpose and will of the Most High to supply us with a book which shall give us regulations for conduct without our being able to know Him and to understand His mind and character ?’ or, ‘ Has it been,’ as was the contention on the other side, ‘ His great purpose, in whatsoever revelation He has made, to bring us into a knowledge of Himself, which becomes gradually more perfect as time proceeds here, and will become perfect hereafter when time is no more ; to bring us into conformity with the will of One who makes Himself known ?’

Professor Fraser’s words are as true now as they were at the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century, though the battle has entered into a new phase. Those who contended then for what they called ‘ a regulative faith ’ based its authority, largely at least, upon a book revered by all engaged in the discussion. It was the very book of which Mr. Matthew Arnold declared, in the lecture I have already quoted, that the *Zeitgeist* had demolished the authority—‘ The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature.’ They further based its authority generally on those ‘ evidences ’ which it appears to have been the great object of the modern students of Nature to demolish.

\* The reference is to Mr. Mansel’s Bampton Lectures on ‘ The Limits of Religious Thought,’ and to my father’s ‘ What is Revelation ?’

Meantime Mr. Herbert Spencer had been perfecting a system which, in the first sentences of his great book, he declared to be only the legitimate working out of the principles of the exponents of a regulative creed. The very title of the sect of which he is the apostle, 'The Agnostic,' shows how entirely the controversy turns on the question formulated by Professor Fraser.

Science more and more appears to be taking up the position that she will not, as she was asked to do, supply authority to the regulative code. So far as she is concerned, the highest altar is to be raised, not to the Unknown God, but to the Unknown. Mr. Darwin, in his beautiful modesty, confessed that scientific work entails an atrophy of interest in man and the ways of man, even when set forth by the genius of Shakespeare; though, by a strange irony, his biography gathers at least one of its greatest charms from the attractiveness of the character of the man it reveals.

Louder and more loudly science seems to be delivering as her special message, so far as it concerns Wisdom in the sense in which, at least in old times, Wisdom was the object of philosophic search: 'The deep saith, It is not in me, and the sea saith, It is not in me. It is not in the fire, it is not in the earthquake, it is not in the mighty wind.' And, stretching her wings to a wider flight than was possible for her before, she declares: 'I find it not among the myriad myriad stars or in the spaces that spread between. The myriad myriad ages of which I tell yield me no record of it.'

Seeing, then, that there are a few who still desire to pursue the search, is it wonderful if they should turn to inquire whether there may not be stiller and smaller voices which yet have power to reach the minds of men? It is at least the fact that a few men, almost perhaps unheard amidst the din of modern life, have been turning to that question. Those who, like Mr. Martineau, Mr. Lilly, Dr. Ward, from different points of view, have been taking up the questions of 'The Study of Religion,' 'Right and Wrong,' and the like, have been all more and more con-



cerning themselves, not with the authority of evidence, but with the minds of men and the works of men. They have been more and more forced to assert as a philosophical fact the capacity of men to distinguish between right and wrong as such. Now, what I want to suggest is this : At the time when dogma was first put forth as a decree of the Most High to be accepted as regulating human belief, and regulating morals, apart from all knowledge of its Author, the world was subject to the master of legions. The highest embodiment of human power was the man who could issue arbitrary decrees based for their authority upon the power of the sword. The Greek Empire, as Gibbon has admirably shown, was peopled by a race of slaves who instinctively bent before power. The master of legions continually imposed his own decrees upon the councils of the Church. Was there no relation between the view then taken of the highest human power and that taken of Almighty power and wisdom ? No one doubts the length of time during which such a tendency, once impressed upon the minds of mankind, lasts on through ages and under infinite varieties of form.

May not the traditional influence of that spirit of the Cæsars have unconsciously affected the views of many exponents of religious truth, who would suppose themselves to have been completely freed from its influence ? May it not have appeared among those who would most eagerly repudiate all the authority of Rome ?

What, then, is the influence which military training is exercising over the minds of men among the most civilized nations of the Continent ? Clearly it is something altogether different from the influence of the arbitrary authority which was exercised by the Roman or Greek Emperor. If nevertheless that influence extends more immediately and directly over millions of men than was ever the case before, will not the tendency be for the Zeitgeist to show the change in its relation to faith which is indicated by the changed conditions under which power now exists ? I have shown that the master of legions no longer expects to have mere regula-

tions obeyed or rules of conduct enforced. The essential condition is that the subordinate shall enter into and understand the mind and purpose of him who issues the order. When human power is based on this necessity, is it not at least likely that the worship of mankind towards the highest power will follow the course which training in human obedience and subordination tends to give it ?

Further than that, is there not something strange in the fact that, while one part of mankind has no idea what the other is thinking about, there should all the while have been this relation between the influences which affect them ? I do not know whether I can in any way convey the feeling which came over myself when, having had with some pains and care to make myself acquainted with the moral change which was affecting modern armies, I had afterwards to study more thoroughly than I had done before—for the purposes of the biography of my father—the questions between a regulative creed and a creed which assumed a human faculty framed to know and enter into the mind of the Lawgiver. It was to me at least one of those strange experiences before which Wordsworth says our mortal nature

Trembles like a guilty thing surprised.

If this had been brought about by no human design, and yet there was no mistaking the relation between the influence of one part of the question upon the other, by whom had it been wrought ?

Might this not be the mode taken by the Most High for deciding among men the question whether or no He wills to be known or only to have His dictation obeyed ?

Let me recall the point I made perhaps somewhat lightly, in speaking of the way in which the change in the nature of modern discipline was brought about—that it was by no means due to any deliberate design on the part of soldiers. On the contrary, I may say at once, and frankly, that the dispersed order of fighting which makes the enlarged discipline, the training of mind, necessary, is a horrible nuisance

to us. We try to minimize it to the utmost of our power. We have to train soldiers to get together again, and to keep themselves in as close formations as possible, in order to let this dispersed order, this period of individual action, individual initiative, combined independent judgment, be as short as possible. But the people who have been too strong for us are those very inventors, those men of the workshop and the closet, of whose work we know little or nothing until they actually supply us with the weapons. They certainly had and could have no idea of how their inventions were going to change the discipline necessary for the modern fight, for soldiers only found it out by actual experience.

It is clear, therefore, that whatever strange correspondence I have been able to trace between the problems of life as they now present themselves to the minds of all thinking men, and, as I should suppose, especially to the minds of those cultivated ladies, the London teachers of ladies, who once met many years ago to arrange to get history written without mention of battles or soldiers, and if possible to prevent their young ladies from knowing that such abominable people existed at all—between these problems and the necessities of modern discipline, at all events that correspondence has been brought about by no human design. Whether it is an accident or whether it rather has the appearance of the handiwork of One who loves thus to effect His designs in the most unlikely ways through the agency of men, who blindly work the righteous will of Heaven, is a question not, I think, to be pressed, but only suggested. To me it has seemed, in those circumstances, as if the *Zeitgeist* might be, after all, less the poet's Will-o'-the-wisp than that actual Brocken spectre which appears to the traveller, and is formed by his own shadow projected in huge exaggeration upon the clouds which conceal and cover the mountains. Who can deny to it that power which Mr. Arnold attributed to it? How can we, standing with our backs to the sun, see the mountains under the mighty influence of the shadow without being



impressed with its majesty? How can we see the mountains at all otherwise than as they change their hues beneath the clouds over which the shadow dances? Nevertheless, if we find that it always in fact humbly follows our own movements, it may be more worth while to ascertain the influences which affect us, and perhaps to have a glance back on the sun as he slowly rises, than to submit humbly to worship our own shadow. At any rate, the clouds will pass and the shadow with them. The mountains and the sun will remain.

## II

### *THE DISCIPLINE OF OUR CITIZEN SOLDIERS\**

#### The Meaning and Value of Routine.

YOUR GRACE† AND GENTLEMEN,

I feel strongly that there is a certain dogmatism in the form which a short lecture almost inevitably assumes, which is very unsuitable to me in addressing you. I am going to tell you what I myself very strongly think and believe. In no instance, if I can help it, will what I say have been the result of hasty consideration. Moreover, I have not intentionally missed any opportunity of consulting those whose opinions are of value. Now, I have observed that certain simple military principles have not hitherto been brought under your notice. They are the most commonplace, but also, I believe, the most important of any ; and it has seemed to me at least possible that, just because all soldiers know them well, no particular soldier may mention them to you.

Pardon me ; I speak for the moment as if we soldiers came here to address you, not as soldiers, but as citizens. There is one sense in which you would with much justice repudiate that assumption. There was a time when some of the most zealous Volunteers were not very certain 'wherefore they were come together'—when you would at least have been contented with a programme which proposed to you 'to

\* This paper originally took the form of a lecture delivered by my father at the Royal United Service Institution to an audience of Volunteer officers in the year 1873. It was edited by him, and the notes were added in 1906.—ED.

† His Grace Lieutenant-General the Duke of Wellington had been kind enough to take the chair on the invitation of the National Artillery Association.

interest nearly 1,200 separate localities in military questions ; to awaken them to a patriotic sympathy with the army ; and partially to prepare, to anticipate and provide against the consequences and risks of an invasion.\* But the truth is, you have very nearly carried out that programme. Thanks mainly to you, the relationship in which the army stands to the nation is one altogether different from what it was. If anyone doubts how great the change has been, let him hear this description of things as they once were by one who had better means of knowing them than any, one who never modified his statement of what he believed to be true, for any object on earth. He says of the army :

‘ It is an exotic in England. The officers and soldiers of the army are an object of dislike and suspicion to the inhabitants while serving with their regiments, and of jealousy afterwards, and they are always ill-treated.’†

To be sure that that was true on April 22, 1829, it is enough to say that the Duke of Wellington said then that it was true. Is it true now? I for one think that we owe it mainly to you that it is not so.

I am impressed with the idea that you now meditate a further step in the programme. If I had doubted it before, I should have been convinced by the reception which you gave to some things which were well said here last week,‡ and notably by the heartiness with which you responded to the words in which your Inspector-General§ told you that you were now definitely part of the forces of the land, and must expect to meet with that plain English in which at present, thank God, all on whom the honour of England depends, are told what they have yet to learn, if they would be worthy of her glorious service. If I did not mistake the tone of that meeting, in so far as it represented the Volun-

\* Sir T. Acland’s pamphlet on ‘ Volunteer Discipline,’ p. xiv.

† ‘ The Despatches of the Duke of Wellington,’ large edition, vol. viii., p. 345 ; ‘ Selections,’ p. 919.

‡ At Captain Home’s lecture on ‘ The Recent War [*i.e.*, that of 1870] with Reference to the Militia and Volunteers,’ since published.

§ Sir Garnet Wolseley.



teers, those who have held on despite recent changes have taken a very serious responsibility upon themselves. Let me explain what I mean. Your military training has taught you the great strategic lesson that defence can only be by counter-attack. You know that when war comes, no matter how purely defensive on our part its origin may be, if we are then governed by any Ministry that is not absolutely insane, it will not be on this sacred soil of England that the contest will be fought out. If I mistake you not, you do intend to do your utmost to prepare yourselves for this, that no fear for a sudden attack upon her hearths and homes shall prevent the heaviest possible blow which we can deliver from being struck for the safety and honour of England elsewhere. Whether it be or be not possible to obtain from the electors or from any Government power which will enable us to speak without fear when justice is outraged, you at least are ready to do your utmost that England may trust her shores in safety for a time almost to your keeping alone, whilst the distant contest is carried on by nearly the whole force of the army. Moreover, I think that you, at least, would echo those words of our Laureate's which, if not applicable for the moment to the condition of the Continent, may in that ever-sifting sand soon become so again:

No little German state are we,  
But the one voice in Europe: we *must* speak.\*

You do not intend, if you can help it, that the voice shall be always mere empty chatter.

Now, gentlemen, if that is so, you must not mind being told of any difficulties which stand in the way of your realization of that grand dream. I am not come here to-night to flatter you. I do not know enough of all your circumstances to judge how far you can meet the conditions which I most surely believe to be necessary if you would achieve your end. But, speaking as a subaltern of the regular army, I want if I can to draw your attention to

\* The third of February, 1852.—TENNYSON.

what every subaltern sees before him in his ordinary daily routine work, and I want to point out to you that, whatever improvement we may require in the nature of that work, the evidence of war is absolute as to the advantage which regular armies do gain by the meagrest, least intellectual, immediate duty which is done in peace time by an army working together as an army. I know well that the express words of one great man at all events may be quoted against me. I know well that Sir Henry Lawrence said :

‘ No, it is not elementary knowledge, such as barrack life or regimental parades can give, that is most essential to a commander ; it is good sense, energy, thoughtfulness, and familiarity with independent action. It is not by three times a day seeing soldiers eat their rations . . . or by marching round barrack squares, that officers learn to be soldiers, much less to be generals.’\*

I hope that by the time I have finished my lecture you will not suppose that Sir Henry Lawrence would differ very greatly from me. If I had, as it is just now not infrequently my duty to do, to talk as Sir Henry was talking to those who may soon be engaged in that same ordinary routine, and apt to become sunk in its details, instead of appreciating the importance of its whole character, I might be disposed to call in his authority and to repeat those words. But I cannot help believing that just at this moment there are several reasons why I should be more anxious to state to you the advantages which we have gained from our peace training of the past than to press upon you the necessities for improvement.

First, for your own sakes, I believe that that which I speak of is by far the most difficult part of your task, and it is always best to look straight at the most difficult thing we have to encounter.

Secondly, I do think that there is a false note in the

\* Quoted from the motto adopted by Sir T. Acland for his pamphlet on ‘ Volunteer Discipline.’

response which comes from the public to the cry for military reform, which has been raised by some of our ablest men, and to you they must look, as their best interpreters, to correct it.

Thirdly, I cannot imagine anything more disastrous for the army itself than the existence of a notion among the public, of which I see not a few indications, that those who enter the army ought to be impregnated with the feeling that they are too superior to soil their hands with, or take any interest in, the daily routine of peace life, since they are to devote themselves to matters much too ethereal for anything of the kind. So far as I am able to judge, it does not seem to be likely that, whilst passing by the simple duties with contempt, they will pay on that account much more attention to the direct study of war.

Let me tell you a few of the indications which make me think that the subject I now bring before you is one the exact nature of which it behoves you to study closely and thoroughly. I am sure that most of those who are here will remember the very remarkable series of articles on the 'Changes in Modern Warfare' which appeared in the *Times* shortly before the late autumn manœuvres, chiefly in the form of letters from abroad. I need not refer to the contents of those articles. They were sketches of what was going on in foreign armies, which struck all those whose opinion on such subjects we consider valuable as simply masterly. But they had scarcely come to an end, when a letter appeared in the *Times* which was intended to draw from them what is, if it be true, an important deduction. The main point of the writer of the letter was this : If account be taken of all that had been so well said as to the changed conditions of warfare, the inevitable inference is that, mere drill being of less importance now than formerly, all attempt to maintain an army must be unnecessary. 'Since it will now be very easy for anybody in a very short time to learn all that is necessary in the way of drill, obviously there can be no reason for keeping soldiers together to learn it.'



I do not think it was necessary then, or that it is necessary now, to take much trouble to convince a nation which has recently watched the course of such a struggle as that of 1870 that regularly-formed and well-trained armies are more than ever indispensable in warfare. At all events, gentlemen, I do not intend to occupy your time with any investigation of that matter. So far as I have had the honour and pleasure of being acquainted with Volunteer officers, their tendency is certainly not to underrate the advantages which a long peace training gives to an army. But, for all that, the letter I have spoken of is a convenient, because a somewhat exaggerated, illustration of a certain feeling, very much more easy to understand than exactly to define. It is one which, under a different form, is very fully shared by some members of the Volunteer force, as is proved by letters which they not infrequently write to the papers. Perhaps their thought may be expressed somewhat in this way :

‘The advantage as a matter of fact which regularly trained troops living together as an army in peace time possess does certainly seem to be proved by their successes in war, but to what, in the name of all that is reasonable, is it due? They do nothing all day but a certain amount of drill, a certain amount of practice with their weapons, and besides—well, the cavalry and artillery of course look after their horses and guns, and the whole army does some work in keeping their accoutrements and barracks in good order; but out of all these which is it that gives them the advantage in war? You say now that the drill itself has rather an indirect than a direct importance. In the use of your weapons we can beat you at Wimbledon, and we have beaten you at Shoeburyness. Surely it is not your polishing of buckles that helps you?’

There is, in fact, constantly expressed a sense of a certain secrecy, mystery—perhaps, after all, sham—put forward merely in order to induce John Bull to put his hands into his pockets more readily. This comes out in all sorts of different ways. I scarcely know whether those who profess

to know nothing about the army, and to hate what they do know, or those who think they know all about it, exhibit this more prominently.

A good friend of my acquaintance, whom I meet at intervals sufficiently long to make him forget each time how often he has put the same facts before me, never fails to come and condole with me on the dreariness which must attend soldiering in peace time; and, taking for granted that I have no intention of contradicting him, he proceeds to show his sympathy and his knowledge by speaking of the unsatisfactory nature of a work which can in itself have no interest, and is only a preparation for a condition of things which may never be, and for which a true patriot has hardly the right to wish.

A great army reformer from the North of England, whom I happened to meet at Metz during the debates on the Army Bill, hot from the battle-fields, told me that nothing was so easy as to select officers for promotion in peace time. I ventured to ask him for the solution of a question which appeared to all so important, and to the few who have carefully studied it so difficult. 'Oh, see if they know their drills well, and—and——' He became very vague beyond that point, so I suggested that he would have a good many candidates for selection if a simple drill test were adopted. When I ventured further to hint that I hoped he would find nearly throughout the service that, if any ordinary perfection in that respect were required, it would become necessary to promote by demerit, or there would be no selection at all, he turned away from me with contempt.

Again, take this instance. By way of remedying the defects of a test of the qualifications of Volunteer officers, it is suggested that some of the London Volunteers should go through a field-day at Aldershot with other troops. A zealous but unhappy Volunteer, who has devoted a day with his corps to the purpose, writes to the *Times* to complain bitterly that, having been present throughout the whole field-day, his corps did not fire a shot. He seems half

inclined to think that the General commanding ought to be dismissed for incompetence, because he did not contrive that the zeal and the ammunition of the particular corps should be satisfactorily expended. Clearly, here is another effort genuinely made to do all that soldiers do in order to become soldiers, and yet those who have made it feel that they are not much farther advanced by what they have done.

Now, I cannot too strongly express the sense which I, in common with all soldiers who have taken trouble to examine the matter, have of the benefits which we owe to you. I do think, as was so admirably said to you here a few weeks ago,\* that you have done much more for us than we have been able to do for you. There are many reasons for it. This seems to me the chief one, that we do practically and habitually that of which you need to know the rationale. From the very nature of that which causes our efficiency, we are unable theoretically to tell you exactly what it is. Our business is not public talking, and the mere carrying on of a practical duty in even the most perfect possible manner does not involve at all necessarily the thinking out of 'the why and the wherefore.' When, therefore, you come to us, and ask us, 'what are we to do that we may acquire the same degree of power for war, which we frankly admit that you do by some inscrutable process gain in the scrubbing of harness and the scouring of tables?' we have no great facility in answering you. It has not been our business to think why we did what we have had to do, so much as to do it.

I believe that one of the greatest benefits which you have conferred upon us is that you have forced from us a distinct answer to this inquiry. I think I am not mistaken in putting it forward as a genuine one. I know well from my own experience that it presents a difficulty to the minds of many not belonging to the regular army, both Volunteers and

\* By Lieutenant-Colonel Evelyn Wood, V.C., in his lecture on 'Mounted Riflemen,' since published.



others. I shall scarcely be able to do more to-night than to hint at the solution. To answer it fully would take a literature, for it involves the investigation of a very deep vein in the mine of human nature, one that has been singularly little reported upon, however closely it has been surveyed for working purposes. What, then, is it which regular armies do in peace time which prepares them for effective action in war? What is it that is so difficult for those who are not in peace time devoted to soldiering to acquire?

You will see that I have in saying this somewhat limited my subject. For I need not speak to you of the advantages of drill or of shooting practice, nor yet, again, of the necessity of training men to endure severe marching; nor yet of its being indispensable to keep all materials of an army in good order, and to train men to know how to keep them in good order during war time, more especially arms and ammunition, large and small, horses, and harness, both as to fitting and condition, etc., for of many of these you are already masters; and that which is most technical in any of these belongs to special corps, whose place few of you aspire to take. That which is really difficult for you is connected with all these, but is not these. So little, indeed, does it consist in the mere keeping of material in good order, that if I must select something definite with which to connect it, I would choose—forgive me if for a moment I almost seem to treat you with impertinence—the polishing of buckles. I do not think that I should be misunderstood by any soldier. I am quite sure that I should be misunderstood by none of those who have been setting before us most clearly the necessities of the modern fight, if I say that I can better express to myself the intense interest which my profession in peace time has always had for me, altogether apart from its theoretical study, by that answer than by any other. If a soldier's beau-ideal of all perfection is to be the polish of his buckles, or any other kind of outward show, of course none more contemptible can be imagined. But if we have never the right to say that the end justifies the means, there are

certainly times when the means go very far towards glorifying the momentary end. I prefer to select that which, in its momentary effect, tends not at all towards war-like, hardly even towards peace efficiency, rather than some form of training which has an apparent military advantage, because round it I can mentally gather all thoughts which relate to the development in each rank of that habit of getting duty done as duty, and to that wonderful organic unity on which the creation of an army effective for war most depends. It is in the development of that effective organic unity, that power in an army of acting as one body animated by one spirit, that the whole interest of our work in peace time centres.

It is this, and all that is involved in this, which we fail to make clear to some, at all events, among you. In a general way we tell you that 'discipline' is your difficulty. But 'discipline' is a word which some, at all events, do not understand in the sense in which it is used by those, for instance, who tell us that 'Discipline won the victories of the late war.'\* Discipline is a thing the necessity for which in an army, in one sense, no one outside of it doubts. But by discipline, in popular parlance, is usually meant that which is in no wise sufficient for an army. Obedience to the personal command of a superior is, of course, a necessity, but I do not believe for a moment that that will constitute your difficulty. What I am anxious to make clear to you is that our work in peace time has a certain definite education in it for our work in war time, the nature of which can be much more fully set before you than it has yet been. In relation to all other professions, anyone who approaches them from the outside is fully conscious that there is a long preliminary training which has a distinct value in relation to their practice. In the case of soldiering alone—and we have, I believe, ourselves mainly to thank for it—no one outside the army seems to dream that there is anything but a little drill to be learnt by the daily routine.

There seems to be a popular notion that discipline is a

\* Of 1870.

thing which can be taken on and put off, like a glove, at no notice at all. It sounds almost an insult to tell a man, who knows well that he is quite ready to sacrifice everything to the cause he has at heart, that he requires to learn discipline. He quite understands in the abstract the necessity that one man should command, and that others should obey. What he does not understand are the difficulties of command and the difficulties of entering into a relationship with his fellows, to which he is wholly unaccustomed.

For the statement that discipline, in the sense of personal obedience to orders, is not enough for war, we have absolute authority. At the time when the Spanish and Portuguese armies were rendering every operation which could be undertaken hopeless and disastrous, Lord Wellington thus wrote to Beresford :

‘ We are mistaken if we believe that what these Portuguese and Spanish armies require is discipline, properly so called. They want the habits and spirit of soldiers; the habits of command on one side, and of obedience on the other; mutual confidence between officers and men; and, above all, a determination in the superiors to obey the spirit of the orders they receive, let what will be the consequence, and the spirit to tell the true cause, if they do not.’

Now, much—in which I will not insult you by saying that you would be wanting—is included in that statement. But ‘habit’ is a matter of slow development, for which you, as soldiers, have avowedly hardly time. Those seem to me your wisest advisers who frankly face the fact, and tell you that you must by ‘conscious effort’ do what we do by habit. But for conscious effort distinct knowledge of what is to be attained is necessary. You must know what the habits are which you are by ‘conscious effort’ to acquire. It is as to these that I think we, who devote so much time to the process, ought, if we are once fairly driven into a corner, to be able to give you some answer.

Before attempting to give you this answer, I would point



out that, to a certain extent, the habits I speak of may be acquired in many of your own pursuits unconnected with the army. Every kind of work in which men are engaged tends to develop habits peculiar to it, which are nevertheless in some degree induced by many other professions; I fancy that there is in some sort a reverse action also, and that the experience of a body so permanent in all its parts as an army ought to suggest the best methods of conducting all kinds of work which depend on the organized action of large bodies of men.

The first of these habits has so many different forms that it includes almost all the others; it is that of recognizing, in all matters of duty, *the part* to play in getting what is required done, to the elimination of what I may call the 'friction of personality.'

Let me illustrate my meaning.

Some years ago a Volunteer review took place, far enough from here, and not at Brighton. The General in command had often been much annoyed by stray shots popped off in mere sport after the reviews were over. He had therefore given orders that the ammunition from the different pouch belts should be collected by the commanders of companies, and that where it was the property of individuals it should be returned to them when the parade had been finally dismissed. Of course, the General had no intention of interfering with the private property of Volunteers, but he had full authority, as long as they were under military orders, to put a stop to a most unmilitary proceeding. Now what, in such circumstances, was the duty of each of the officers who had to carry out the orders? Clearly, to explain first to his company the nature of the General's order, and how private rights would be respected; and then, in his definite military capacity, and being fully within his military authority, to give the ordinary simple words of command for the inspection of and emptying of the pouches. Now, it happened that in one case the officer commanding a company gave no definite formal word of command, but

went to each man, and with many apologies and expressions of regret, etc., begged that he would, as the General wished it, open his pouch. It was a Volunteer who told me the story. He was present on that occasion, and, thanks to his usual avocation, which was that of a large manufacturer, his instincts as to what was necessary in any organization made him see how it happened that that particular officer never could get duty properly carried on. The point lies in the want of perception that the exercise of right command is as much a duty as that of right obedience. It was, in fact, from a military point of view an extreme piece of arrogance for the officer to apologize at all. It was not in his personal capacity that he was giving the order, but as a soldier whose duty it was to give it.

There is in the country a sort of notion of the nature of discipline which, I believe more than anything else, makes men like Mr. Freeman and others talk as if it went without the saying, that the peace service of soldiers could do nothing but mischief to them and to their neighbours. 'Hoc volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas' (I chose this, I will have it so; the more senseless my wish, the more shall you yield). That is the sort of notion which I find among my friends, of the ordinary relationship between superiors and inferiors in the English army as in every army. I would venture to draw your attention to the fact that the sentence I have quoted from the bitterest of all satirists—who, since he belonged to the nation which conquered the world, must have had some idea of what soldiering then was—was applied by him to a petulant and debauched woman desiring the death of her slave, and not to any soldier; and that the record we all know of Roman discipline is that of one conscious that he was set 'under authority,' and on that account, and by virtue of that only, having under him those to whom he said 'Go,' and they went.

If anyone who does not know the English army doubts that that is the spirit in which duty has always been carried on in it, I would ask him to turn to a record, which is for

all English soldiers the sure reference book for study of discipline—the one for the completion and perfecting of which the world owes so much to your Grace.\* He will find there one curious fact. While, for a cause which is therein most carefully recorded—namely, the necessity for not letting the enemy know when you have a secret—he, who was the conqueror of the world's conqueror, never assigns the reason for any tactical movement, on the other hand no order on points of discipline is ever issued without the clearest explanation as to the reason for it, or without the order being given in such a manner that every one to whom it was addressed must have distinctly understood that the Duke considered it his duty to give that order as much as it was theirs to obey it. I venture to think that the faculty for so giving an order as to leave that impression is the most valuable one which any soldier could urge you to cultivate.

But to proceed. The fact that the giving of an order is a duty involves the further consideration that it is a duty to see that order carried out. The petulant dame may ten minutes hence change her mind, and wish her slave not dead after all. The soldier whose duty it is to be obeyed cannot afford ever to give an order which he will not remember to have given, and over the full execution of which he will not watch; not so much because it is important that the particular thing should be done, as because any single instance in which an order is not obeyed makes those under him feel doubtful whether he seriously intends to enforce any order. I think that it is this necessity, and the necessity for combining with it the fullest possible confidence in all subordinates, who are worthy of it, which makes the long association of men who are in war to work *together* so valuable. The Duke's orders in the Peninsula, if you trace them carefully, are in this respect one of the most wonderful studies I know. When any case comes before him, he first decides the particular matter on its merits; then he draws

\* 'The Despatches of the Duke of Wellington.'



from the data which are supplied to him inferences as to the manner in which various orders wholly unconnected with the immediate matter in hand are being carried out. Yet the whole is done with the most perfect straightforwardness simply on the data laid before him.

Perhaps the next point to which I shall refer will make the possibility of this supervision without suspicion more evident. There are normally two classes of duties to be performed : one class, like my favourite polishing of buckles, in which the thing itself is of comparatively little importance, and in which it gains its whole value from the manner in which it sets the machinery of organization in motion ; the other, the instances of which are very rare in peace and very common in war, in which the thing to be done is of so much importance that it must be done at the moment, no matter if even the manner of doing it gives something of a jar to the usual arrangement. Of the latter class, the most perfect instance perhaps occurs alike at peace manœuvres and in war, when, as always has happened hitherto, at the moment at which a field gun is to be brought into action\* the gunners are panting in the distance far behind, and generals and their staffs jump down to push forward the weapon to the all-important point. In cases like that, where, previous precautions for efficiency having been neglected, the mischief has to be remedied at all costs, no one can be out of place in lending a hand to get all that is possible done, and generals must be ready, as they ever have been, even to do work which a ploughman, were he only there, could probably better perform. But the cases when such costly waste of labour are necessary in peace time are happily very rare. The class to which I want to draw your attention is the other. There being no emergency, the mere simple peace duty tends to send the life-blood flowing through the whole organization, if you take the right way of doing it, and you may help to throw it all out of gear

\* A satirical reference to the then condition of our field artillery, long since been remedied. The picture at the time was accurate.

by just taking the wrong way. Let me illustrate. You have to inspect a certain number of men—that is, you have to see that they have turned out with their accoutrements in proper order. The sergeant in immediate charge of them has reported to the sergeant-major,\* who has reported to you, that all is correct. You inspect them, and find that some man has appeared on parade improperly dressed in some respect—with a dirty buckle, if you like. What are you going to do? To find fault first of all, and most gravely, with the man who certainly ought to have cleaned his buckle? Well, look what you will have done if you do that. First of all you will have told the sergeant who was responsible that the man turned out properly upon parade, as clearly as if you had put it into so many words to him: ‘I don’t care in the least that you should do your duty. I shall do my best in future, as I have done now, to dispense with your services and to use my own eyes.’ If he is a good soldier, proud of being responsible for his own men, and of seeing that they are properly turned out, you will have utterly disgusted him by ignoring him, even though he made the slip of not noticing the man. If he is a bad sergeant, he will quietly calculate that as far as you are concerned he need trouble no further to do his duty, for he knows you have no intention of looking after him. Secondly, precisely the same calculation will have taken place in your sergeant-major’s mind, and not only will the strictness with which he will look after that sergeant suffer, but, so far as you are concerned, he will lose all interest in and all care to make any of the sergeants under him do their duty.

But supposing you have reversed the process, and spoken to the man who was actually and directly responsible to you—the sergeant-major. Your remonstrance need, if he is at all a decent man, be very slight. Possibly, if he is a man who knows what it is to be proud of seeing the non-commissioned officers under him do their duty, he will take

\* Or ‘colour-sergeant.’

the whole blame upon himself, and will simply tell you that it shan't occur again. What have you then done? That one little word directed to the right man instead of the wrong one has had all these effects. Not only will that sergeant who neglected to report to the sergeant-major know well that the sergeant-major will look very sharp after him another time, but every sergeant will know that the sergeant-major has had his eyes sharpened by having made a slip. Every private will know very soon that all these non-commissioned officers have been by this means awakened to a much sharper attention to their duties. Nor, unless things are in a very bad condition, will the effect be only on such small matters as buckles: for the sergeant-major, and therefore the sergeants, will have been aroused to look after all their duties; and lastly, most important of all, you will have produced by this a considerable effect on those matters on which your eye could directly never fall.

I remember having once said something of this kind by way of explaining to a friend the kind of interest which our work had in it, upon which he said: 'Yes, and then your system comes down with the whole pressure of everybody on the poor private.' Exactly the reverse is really the case. Take the instance I have put. If you notice the private's conduct only to himself, he will run the chance of escaping your eye, which is the only one, as you have taken care that he shall understand, which will be over him. How are you to stop this but by endeavouring to get an occasional example made, and one certain to be an unfair one. On the other hand, if you have succeeded in making your non-commissioned officers do their duty, the irregularity will have been prevented in most cases, and the very slightest fault-finding on most occasions will be sufficient. Moreover, you will have trained yourself in a habit inestimably valuable under present conditions of warfare, that of having your orders carried out through the active instead of the merely passive agency of others.



What is true of these, the lower ranks of the army, is equally true, in a far higher degree, as you ascend upwards. It depends on whether you succeed in establishing such a system of making each rank do its own work, and no one else's, whether you do or do not get things into healthy order by your peace training for war. I have no kind of doubt that it was to some such process of a definite system of graduated authority, of work 'established and well understood,' as the Duke said of it in his letter to Sir John Burgoyne, that Trochu referred when he spoke of 'peacemaking armies efficient, and war tending to impair their efficiency.'

I am very far from intending to suggest that it is advisable to keep the privates at a distance from you. On the contrary, in relation to any matter in which your non-commissioned officers have done their duty so far as using their eyes is concerned, I should say that there is yet another matter in which you have to guide them, that of their manner of dealing with their men. Sir Thomas Acland, speaking of non-commissioned officers, and, if I remember rightly, of officers also, complains that they have as a rule singularly little 'teaching faculty.' I strongly suspect that an Oxford first-class man is likely to know more about the right method of teaching in general than most of us do, and that we are very foolish if we do not try to learn all we can as to method from the experience of our great national educational bodies. But there is one matter in which I would venture to join issue. The teaching of individuals as individuals is only incidentally our work. The very fact that so highly educated a man, and so zealous a Volunteer, speaks as if that was the main business of officers or of non-commissioned officers shows that we have, as to the essential nature of our own business, something to teach our teachers. An old soldier some three hundred years ago took for his motto one which has been very powerful certainly, for at this moment\* the conqueror of Europe is struggling almost in

\* The 'Kultur-Kampf' was at the time going on fiercely in Germany, and Bismarck was apparently by no means getting the best of it.

vain against the society which was founded upon it. Yet the motto of the Jesuits—'The death of the individual in order that the society may live'—is far less potent than our true military motto, which is 'The life of the individual in order that the society may live.' Life is likely to be more potent than death, but the life must be expended 'in order that the society may live.' The difficulty is to acquire the habit of looking to this before all things in the training of yourself and of your men.

Let me take an instance; I like best to take those that are most commonplace. A commanding officer of a Volunteer corps once told me that he could always keep his men silent on parade, because as long as they were at drill he changed formations so smartly that they had no time to talk. In so far as that meant that he knew his drill well, I am quite sure that it had an excellent effect on his men; but in so far as it was a trick by which he made them fancy themselves to be very well disciplined, when in reality they would have chattered if they could, he did them thereby, not good, but distinct mischief. It was important, not that they should be silent, but that they should command themselves so far as to remain silent. The object with us is always the ulterior in preference to the immediate one—the training of each man to take a certain place, not the teaching of a certain lesson or the achievement of a certain task.

So far from its being always advisable to make it *seem* the easiest thing in the world to men to do their duty, there are times when the kindest thing you can do is to make them feel distinctly that it is not easy, and then to confront them with the simple appeal to *duty* itself. I have spoken of this in connection with the question of personal relationship with the privates, because I have always found that Englishmen like you first to speak to them as if you understood the difficulties of the particular situation, and then as if they should be proud to overcome those difficulties.

But if I followed on in this vein I should, as I told you,

be beginning a literature ; and I have yet to speak of the application of these and kindred things to your own special conditions. Your Inspector-General told you last week that from the point of view of individual knowledge you yourselves had by your own voluntary action done by far the largest part of all that has been done to render you efficient. In relation to the matters which I have brought before you to-night, the same rule must obtain. As it has been well said in a passage to which I have already alluded, you must by 'conscious motive, officers and privates working by free consent towards a common end,' do that which we acquire by habit. How far the substitution is possible I do not know, and I think, if I believed it to be easier than I do, I should be more disposed to say so behind your backs than here. I do think the greatest compliment we can pay you is to tell you of your difficulties. But this I will say, that there is no historical proof whatever that if you choose you cannot succeed. As for the Mobiles, I can answer, from conversations I had with a number of them in Le Mans very soon after that phase of the Franco-Prussian War, that many of them had never fired a shot in their lives before they were called upon to fight for their country. I dare say you know that narrative of the time by one of Gambetta's prefects which appeared in *Fraser*. From it it is very apparent that they were as unwilling to serve as they were incompetent to do so. I do not know of any precedent whatever for the existence during a period of apparently profound peace of a body of 160,000 men who genuinely and voluntarily set themselves to do their utmost to prepare themselves for what may come.

Of the Volunteers of 1805, Sir Charles Napier's opinion was that 'two millions of them were,' as he pithily expresses it, 'all right'; and I cannot see why, as far as your part of the matter goes, you should not be, if you choose, as effective whenever war breaks out as they were in 1805. But to that end two things before all others will then be necessary.



First you should distinctly understand this: Splendid as the fact is that such a body of men as you should have thus voluntarily sacrificed your convenience, the value of the sacrifice depends on your not so piquing yourselves on having made it as that, the first time you meet with someone who makes a mistake in dealing with you, you recall your surrender. That was the fatal error which rendered useless the Spanish armies during the Peninsular War. They, unlike the Mobiles, had all the enthusiasm and intention to be self-devoted that you would have; but we have indisputable authority for saying that that very enthusiasm in the form it took was their greatest curse. Everyone who had to obey an order which was unpleasant to him, or in which he thought he detected error, imagined that his own sacrifices to his country had been so sublime already that he need not add to them by obeying an order he thought silly, and he neglected it. Everyone who had to give an order thought that he might order anything, no matter how useless or impossible, because of this enthusiasm. Yet he never thought it right to enforce its execution. How could he deal sharply with such noble enthusiasts? I am far from saying that you are at all likely, as common-sense Englishmen, to make these mistakes; but there is constantly, I think, among men who have not shaken into their places in a great organization, a tendency to imagine that everybody's duty towards them is to be quite perfect, and that, under that condition, they will themselves do very well. Whoever imagines that imagines himself to be entering a paradise or an Utopia in which soldiers and many others besides—doctors and lawyers, for instance—like the evils which they have to oppose, will have vanished away.

The other point is this: You must face the fact that you cannot acquire what we acquire by our methods. It seems to me the greatest of all mistakes for you to attempt to adopt one uniform system in those matters which are not settled for you by regulation, because we adopt one uniform

system. Our lives can be, and are, adjusted to it; yours cannot be. But if, acting by 'conscious motive,' you are to arrive at that part of our result which is valuable to you, you must look to the object to be gained, and must gain it by the methods which your own circumstances render suitable. You must by much insistence get out of our ablest and best officers all that they can give you as the result of their experience as to what are the essential objects to be gained. That done, London cannot dictate to Hereford, nor yet Hereford to Devonshire, how best to apply such experience. But, before all things, do not delude yourselves with the notion that 'standing armies,' 'mercenaries'—call by what names you please those who definitely devote themselves during peace time to preparation for war—have so often triumphed over popular forces without good reason. The reason is worth seeking for. It does not lie on the surface. The power of armies is not the 'visible thing' that Wordsworth thought it was. There is something actually to be learnt as to the art of creating and working great organizations of men. The triumph of the mercenaries has been due to a more real and actual self-surrender to the common end—to a more perfect development of unity and absorption of the powers of all. The process which tends to bring about this result is often going on here in England in peace time when you least suspect it. Do not imagine that because, when you are staying for a month with a regiment of cavalry or infantry or with a battery of artillery, nothing, as it seems to you, is going on which can tend towards efficiency, that therefore nothing is really going on. Whilst you have been kept amused linen has been washed clean, but we have not gone into highways and market-places to advertise the process of washing dirty linen. The more efficiency is produced by a healthy system, the less will you hear of it. So much is this the case that one of the most zealous of soldiers said to me a short time ago: 'Don't you sometimes wish for a profession in which you could feel you had something to show

for what you do, were it only a big hole you had had dug ?' But I think he made answer to himself : ' No, after all, the best part of a soldier's peace work is that, even in that which seems so contemptible, the getting of buckles polished, we can be preparing a genuine efficiency ; and yet by no power on earth can anyone not a soldier tell by mere inspection whether the cleaning of the buckle did tend towards efficiency, or was polished up for a false pretence that it might look well.'



### III

#### 'SLAVISH DISCIPLINE' \*

An Inquiry into the Nature of the Discipline most suited to the  
Conditions of the Modern Battle-field.

SOME three or four years ago a very distinguished statesman† announced in a speech—which I think he made at Newcastle—that the discipline of the army was a 'slavish discipline.' From that time on I have always wished to take up the challenge which he threw down, but I have not hitherto seen my opportunity. I can quite understand that, in viewing the condition of the army which served under Wellington in the Peninsula, without any real accuracy, it may easily be conceived that there were then elements in the condition of our army which implied something like slavery. Undoubtedly the punishments which were meted out by men like Crauford, even by men like Charles Napier, who was notoriously 'the soldiers' friend,' were such as would startle us by their savage severity. But it is an absolutely unfair inference to ignore the conditions of the country as they were 75 or 100 years ago; and because those conditions throughout the country were utterly dif-

\* 'Slavish Discipline' was originally delivered in 1891 as a lecture to the Military Society of Ireland. It was edited for publication by Sir F. Maurice in 1904.—ED.

† The distinguished statesman is Lord (then Mr. John) Morley, who used the expression in a speech in which he replied to an attack made by Lord Wolseley at Oxford in 1889 upon the Home Rule policy of the Government. Maurice sent the lecture to Mr. Morley, who replied repudiating any desire to insist on a phrase which might prove offensive to a body of men 'whom I am bound by all public and private considerations to value and respect.'—ED.

ferent from those in which we now live, to assume that therefore the severity of punishment was the special peculiarity of a particular profession. The army punishments of the time represent a condition of things which, when they contrast with our time, seem to us savage, but they were only exactly in accordance with the habits of the time. It was a time when men were habitually hung for sheep-stealing ; it was a time when our grandfathers, and grandmothers too, to whatever class they belonged, were as boys and girls pretty well whipped, whether they were at school or whether they were at home.

I happened a short time ago to have occasion to run through the pages of Hansard for quite a different purpose, and was rather startled to find that at some time or other, long after the end of the great war—I am tolerably certain that it was not earlier than 1823, and I am nearly sure that it was as late as 1835—a private member of Parliament brought in a motion to do away with the public flogging of women naked through the streets, because of a particularly scandalous case that had just occurred in Edinburgh. The utmost extent to which his motion then went was to transfer to the private prisons the operation which he thought should not be carried on in the public streets. Is it possible to draw any fair inference as to the nature of the discipline of Wellington’s army whilst you ignore these things ? I say that in these circumstances it is ridiculous to take the nature of the punishments inflicted by the men, who held together the discipline of Wellington’s army, who punished the transgressors of that discipline according to the custom of their time, and to assume that the discipline depended on the form of punishment, that the discipline was in itself a slavish discipline. I might easily say, what is perfectly true, that the regimental discipline of the Light Division was built up, not by Crauford, but by Sir John Moore. I might read you some of Moore’s stirring appeals to patriotism, to honour. I might show you how, by precept and example, he had trained his officers to appeal to, and to work upon,

the noblest side of their men, and not to trust to the lash which he, far in advance of the civil statesmen of his time, hated. I might point out that Crauford came to be loved by the men of the Light Division, because the men came to understand that, however stern he was in his punishments, he was stern in the interests of the division, that he sought the good of every separate member of the division in the mode in which he faced unpopularity in order to do his duty. I might say that the orders which he issued and enforced were actually for the comfort of the men who served under him, that these orders yet incurred the bitter hostility of his own officers, men trained by Sir John Moore—the military father of all the Napiers—to love the English soldier, and unable to endure the savagery of Crauford's system. I might take that fact of the way in which the men came to appreciate Crauford's character, whilst the officers felt too much sympathy with their men to forgive his savagery, as showing what was notoriously the condition of the division in which discipline was most savagely enforced, as an illustration of the fact that there were at least other elements, and those of a very solid kind, entering into the formation of that magnificent division.

But there is more telling evidence to which I propose to appeal, the statement of the true basis of Wellington's discipline, given by the great captain himself. It is one that I am anxious to quote, because it is habitually misunderstood and misquoted in England. It is the phrase in which the Duke of Wellington said that 'Waterloo was won at Eton.' This is constantly quoted and spoken of, as if the Duke of Wellington had meant to say, 'because our young officers,' and presumably with them the soldiers, 'were much more athletic than the Frenchmen, therefore they succeeded,' according to the popular imagination, 'in knocking down the soldiers who were opposed to them.' I am certain that the Duke had no such idea in his mind, and I am certain that no one who knows what the true story of the Waterloo campaign is



will doubt what the Duke of Wellington meant when he said that. As the story is currently told, the Duke's remark was made in the playing fields. I have always fancied that it must have been when the Duke had visited Eton on some 4th of June, when he had been looking, first at a cricket-match in the fields, and then had seen the procession of the boats as they went down the Thames. If so, to anyone who knows what the campaign of Waterloo was, the Duke's comparison of the two things is one of the most graphic that has been drawn in history ; for it contains the true story of the cause of the success which attended our armies against the French in the campaign of Waterloo. Our own officers and our own soldiers throughout were just like the cricket eleven at Eton, and showed the subordination that is represented by the working of the boats ; playing up to one another, as well as each doing his own part, each under his own captain, who exercised the most perfect authority because it was the wish and will of his subordinates that he should exercise it. They submitted to him, because it was his duty to give the orders he gave. Each man played his part in the eleven, whether at point, at leg, or at the wicket ; and when it was necessary each one backed up the other, each assisted the other in playing his part in the game.

The French had in them no less of fighting quality than our men had. They fought magnificently ; they were a splendid band of bandits. So splendid was their fighting at Quatre Bras that the Duke of Wellington himself reported, in his official despatch of the battle, that he had been attacked by two corps, consisting of eight French divisions, when, as we now know, he had only been attacked by three divisions. It was not because the Frenchmen could not fight, because they were less athletic than our men, that we beat them ; it was because in every separate stage throughout the campaign the French army suffered from a slavish discipline in this sense, that the whole army had come to depend upon the most slavish watching for the words and orders of Napoleon. Instead of that playing together

and backing up, represented by the eleven at Eton, there was everywhere the wildest mutual suspicion of one another, the wildest personal jealousy, the wildest want of due subordination and of due submission of one man to another. To take a few instances out of the many that I might cite to you, Vandamme, who happened to be commanding the corps in the front of the centre of Napoleon's army on the first day, had gone off in a sulk to an out-of-the-way headquarters, and had taken no trouble to ascertain what orders were issued on the very morning when Napoleon was advancing to attack the allies. Soult, Napoleon's Chief of the Staff, was on his side almost equally careless in playing his part in the matter, so that Vandamme received no orders for the movement. Accordingly Vandamme's corps not only did not play its part in the great game, but instead, by blocking the way, so interfered with the movement of the rest of the French army that the result was a delay of at least four hours to the whole in its advance on Charleroi, a loss of time of which Napoleon himself has spoken as one of the greatest disasters of the campaign. On that same day Vandamme absolutely refused to obey the orders of Grouchy, who was to command his corps with other troops, because he had not received the specific instructions that were issued to Grouchy alone.

It was precisely one of those cases in which everything turned on the point whether or not general discipline was maintained; whether men were eager to place themselves under the orders of those whose duty it was to give orders, or whether it was a system of slavish adherence to the instructions that had been issued by Napoleon. And so it goes on right through the whole story. Privates fell out of the ranks to warn the Emperor to distrust Soult. An officer could not go on outpost duty without being suspected of the intention to desert. The cavalry were fiercely insolent to the infantry; the guards, to both. Every man distrusted his neighbour. I think I may ask you to trust me for it, that the more you look into the story of that

wonderful campaign, the more you will realize what the Duke meant—of course speaking of his own public school, and applying it as an illustration of the same kind of thing that was going on throughout the country everywhere—when he said that Waterloo was won at Eton. Therefore I absolutely disbelieve that there ever was the smallest truth in the assertion that Wellington’s army was held together by slavish discipline. Its very superiority over the army which it had to meet lay precisely in the fact that it was held together by a discipline that was anything but slavish. It had exactly the reverse of the feeling of slavishness, in that every man throughout was playing up to the chief whom he wished to support, whom he desired to obey, and whom it was not only his wish, but his pride and his glory, to obey and assist.

Whatever may be the case as to the stories of the past, the condition to which we have now come in actual fighting makes this, of all questions, the one that is the most vital for us in regard, not only to the discipline of an army for the purpose of holding it together in its ordinary situation as a useful force, but also—as I believe, and as I shall be able to show with the help of the best modern authority on the subject—in regard to our actual manœuvring in battle. Von Moltke definitely says that just such a discipline as is described in the Duke’s familiar phrase is the only means by which we can manœuvre an army on the modern battle-field, and overcome the difficulties which we have to face in presence of the new conditions in war. There is a certain passage for which I propose to give you chapter and verse, because, if I could persuade you to read it, I should like very much to get you to look at it in its *ipsissima verba*, and not merely trust to my reading of it, and therefore I will give you the exact pages in which you will find it.\*

You all know, probably, that long, and sometimes wearisome, as the official history of the campaign of 1870 is, it is lighted up throughout by passages which tradition has

\* See note, p. 184.



always assigned to the pen of Count von Moltke himself. No one can read the book without seeing that, at all events here and there, passages appear in it which are quite peculiar to the genius of von Moltke, as one traces it in other writings, which are known definitely to come from him, and from him only. There is one passage in particular that occurs in a very remarkable period of the history. During all the earlier battles of the 1870 campaign, at Weissenbourg, Spicheren, Woerth, Colombey, and at Mars la Tours, every battle was, as with the lightest possible touch he suggests, brought on not only without his orders and design, but in most cases distinctly contrary to his wishes. When, then, at the end of the Battle of Gravelotte he comes to sum up the story of those earlier battles, including the Battle of Gravelotte, he, with a delicacy which no one who reads his words carefully can fail to detect, tells us that the zeal and enthusiasm which had led to the bringing on of those haphazard battles was a thing which it would be most undesirable to check in an army. But, with another evidently ironical expression, he suggests that the opportunities that were thereby offered to the French army for inflicting the most disastrous consequences on the Germans were only missed because of the military failure of the French army. In other words, he implies that in presence of a really effective army in the field, well handled and well managed, such a series of battles as the Germans brought on haphazard during the campaign would be most disastrous to an army. These are conditions under which it is likely that, if at any time at all, the great soldier of the campaign would tell us of the remedies which he suggests for the future.

It is a very remarkable thing which he does tell us. He says that it had come to pass, as a consequence of the heavy losses which the German army had suffered and the sense of failure which those losses had produced, that the whole army felt the absolute necessity for devising some new way of maintaining discipline, since under the

modern conditions of war it is no longer possible to do this with the same facility as in the old rigid formations, which had been broken up under the severe fire of modern arms. The army felt spontaneously that, in battle, it was indispensable for all men at the earliest possible moment to replace themselves under the orders of higher authority, and that, if any sufficient effect was to be produced, it was also indispensable for the authorities at every stage of the military hierarchy to endeavour to regain their authority as soon as possible over the elements which were continually tending to dissolve.

Now, we have just lately had a very vigorous discussion carried on between a soldier who has, at all events, acquired a great reputation in Germany as an extremely able student of war, the author of the ‘ Summer Night’s Dream,’\* and the soldiers who have looked on what he has put forward as absolutely impossible. We are all agreed as to the necessity of some means by which we can obviate the difficulty which undoubtedly encounters us in our present conditions of fighting—of maintaining unity and control at all. As you all know, the author of the ‘ Summer Night’s Dream ’ has proposed, no matter how great the losses may be which will be sustained by any body of men who are kept together in close order, to accept the risks of such losses in preference to losing the control which he, like everybody else, feels to be indispensable for the united working of an army. I have recently put this problem to a test, which I rather like to apply to any new problems which may arise. I happen now to be at the Staff College, and have a very able body of officers there to whom it is my duty from time to time to assign subjects for discussion. I had something like thirty men to whom I left the subject to be thrashed out in this form : Assuming the author of the ‘ Summer Night’s Dream ’

\* A translation of this pamphlet appeared in the *United Service Magazine* of June, 1890. The original has long been attributed, without contradiction, to General Meckel, the guide and teacher of the Japanese army.—Ep,

and Captain May, the author of the 'Tactical Retrospect' (which was the original book which introduced us to the necessities of modern skirmishing, from his experience in the 1866 campaign), to be the most representative writers of the opposite schools of thought, I asked them to take the test of the actual facts as they occurred in the 1870 campaign, and to examine by the light of the facts which of those two methods of dealing with the question appeared to be the most possible with regard to future war. I think that anybody who had just been going through, as I have been, the series of papers which were written with great pains and care on that subject, so that really, I think, from one source or another, almost every fact bearing on the subject has been brought in and thrashed out, would be led to the same conclusion as I have been. It is this: that in whatever way the question of detail in regard to movements, as between various forms of skirmishing order, or such single rank close order as is defended by the 'Summer Night's Dream,' be decided, the old principle which Von Moltke had set forth in the passage to which I have referred\* is the one towards which it is necessary for us to work in all our peace training, whatever else we may or may not do.

What Von Moltke tells us, what comes out even more if you closely examine the series of the battles as given in the regimental histories of the 1870 campaign, is that during all those earlier battles the companies and battalions were very much working out for themselves, as best they might, the methods of fighting which were most convenient. It was only after the full experience of the early battles of the war, in which the most intolerable confusion and the most severe losses arose from the loose action of independent commanders, that the army as a whole was brought to realize the necessity of deliberate, habitual, and active self-sub-

\* It occurs in the second volume of Colonel Clarke's translation of the 'Prussian Staff History,' from pp. 165 to 169—there are only five pages—and the special and most remarkable passage is at the head of p. 169. It consists of only four or five lines.



ordination as the only means of securing the unity through which alone success could be secured, without frightful confusion and loss.

Now, it seems to me that the point to which they had been brought by those severe losses is that towards which we ought to be able to work by long peace training and careful preparation, so that we, at the beginning of a new war, may have arrived without those losses at the condition which their own severe losses had impressed upon the Prussians. Undoubtedly, when they entered on the 1870 campaign they had in no wise whatsoever prepared their men for the conditions which they actually encountered. As far as I can read the story, battalion after battalion, almost company after company, found themselves forced to adopt a looseness of formation—a dispersion in fighting, for which their men were entirely unprepared, having had no training for any such condition of things previously. It almost inevitably followed that men who had been held by the tightest bonds of discipline in close order drill, when they were loosed from them, were exceedingly difficult to keep in any control or in any unity whatever.

By the time of the Battle of Gravelotte two things, so far as I have been able to observe, had happened. In the first place, the tremendous losses which had occurred had made the privates and the junior officers and non-commissioned officers throughout the army realize the necessity of some higher control. On the other hand the headquarters staff knew very little indeed, curiously little, of the details of what had been taking place on the battle-fields. So much was that the case that there is now absolutely no doubt whatever that, when the King's order after the Battle of Gravelotte was published—the order which has again and again been mistakenly referred to as a remarkable point in the history and sequence of tactics—the King who gave that order and the headquarters who issued it were absolutely ignorant of what had taken place even in that particular Battle of Gravelotte.

You will find the order quoted in Colonel Home's book on 'Tactics.'\* It expressly says that as battalion columns had been used in the course of the battles, and as it had been found that they were too solid bodies for the present condition of fighting, it was desirable that they should not be employed again, but that half-battalions or other formation should be employed. As a matter of fact, battalion columns had not been employed in the fighting line in any of the battles. Regimental histories show that nothing of the kind took place except, perhaps, in one movement in the Battle of Weissenbourg. It is a very curious point, an interesting point, because it shows you how little a headquarters staff may know of what is going on in detail under their orders. Certainly they did not know this. But they had very clearly realized from above the effect on the general conduct of the campaign of the difficulties which had in quite a different way been brought home to the minds of the junior officers throughout the army, and the dangers which had been incurred by the looseness of action, want of cohesion, and want of unity, in carrying out the general orders.

This feeling having from different causes penetrated through all ranks of the army, from above and from below, my own belief is that advantage was taken of that relatively long pause which took place between the Battles of Gravelotte and Sedan to give it effect. The long march left time for the headquarters staff to instil into the minds of the subordinate generals the absolute necessity for making a new kind of attempt at securing subordination and unity. It could not thus suddenly during war time have been secured merely by orders from above, but, as I have shown, it happened that below as well as above there was a disposition which made it possible to secure that unity, because all the men in the ranks, and the junior officers, had come to realize the impossibility of successfully carrying out the work, except under enormous dangers, in the fashion in which the Germans had been fighting up to that time.

\* 'A Précis of Modern Tactics.' London, 1873, p. 77.

As I believe, the details of the fighting in the battles which followed Gravelotte, more especially at Beaumont and Sedan, are much less important than the evidence you do most distinctly find in the story of these battles, of a deliberate self-restraint throughout all ranks, of subordination at every stage. Each army commander, each commander of a corps, each divisional commander, and all other subordinates, endeavoured at the earliest possible stage to replace themselves under authority, or to act as part of a great whole by willing self-restraint and mutual co-operation, where it had become so excessively difficult, where it had, in fact, become impossible for authority to be *enforced*. They thereby secured a direct unity of working at the Battle of Sedan, which had been absent in every other battle in an amazing degree—so much so that I doubt if any civilized army won so many battles as the Germans won up to the Battle of Gravelotte with such amazing heedlessness, such an amazing want of unity of control by government from above. Von Moltke, with the most extraordinary patience, utilized what had happened to drop into his mouth, and took the success ‘the gods had provided.’ But hardly in any single instance does he suggest that he brought about any of the fighting up to the Battle of Gravelotte. Now, if that is so, here is a lesson of the campaign which has gradually dropped out of the minds of the armies of Europe, as it is always apt to do, and has been replaced by a study of the mere formations, which are of no use whatever unless the right spirit animates them.

We are all agreed that this absence of control from above must be the normal experience of present-day war. We are seeking to combat it by developing the initiative and the resource of all subordinates, each in their proper sphere, so that each may learn to act intelligently in default of orders. But we run a serious danger in developing initiative of increasing instead of controlling the confusion we have learnt to expect on the modern battle-field. If each subordinate, when out of touch with his superior, is to act on



his own judgment and to be absolved from all effort to mend the broken chain of command, we shall look in vain for that unity of activities which we know to be the main cause of success. Initiative to be useful must be controlled by the discipline of which I speak. First of all, the subordinate, in choosing his course of action, must be determined to play, not for his own hand, but for the good of his side, and next he must be determined loyally to replace himself at the earliest possible moment under his superior, or, failing this, under some other superior who can co-ordinate his efforts for the general good.

It would be a very long story to go through, but it is a very curious one, how almost, year after year, the Prussians made successive experiments in their search for the best form of fighting to adopt. Each corps commander seems to have felt it to be a point of honour to devise some new method for each inspection. Naturally, more and more the changes came to be made from mere peace conveniences, quite apart from the war experiences of 1870, as has been most usefully pointed out to us by the author of the 'Summer Night's Dream.' It has been suggested by some writers—for example, in the 'Dream'—that if you only had men who would face fire in the way in which our forefathers faced it, we should be able to incur the risks of keeping men together in close order. It has been said in some papers lately that it is ridiculous to allege that the severity of modern fire is the cause which has led to our being obliged to abandon 'close order' formations, because our forefathers in the course of the fight often suffered much more severe losses than is represented by any fighting in the German battles. Now, it is perfectly true that, if you tot up the losses in many of the battles of the Peninsular and other wars, the actual percentage was greater than in the case of many of the battles in 1870. But that does not carry one tittle of proof to the solution of this question, because the point is not that the Germans did, as a matter of fact, run away when the loss was upon them, but simply that their formations

broke up. The fact is that, whereas our forefathers had to advance for some sixty or seventy yards under infantry fire, the Germans had to advance under fire for distances of from eighteen hundred or seventeen hundred down to perhaps one thousand yards. The actual conditions of manœuvring which are involved in the two cases are so absolutely at variance that there never has been a case prior to 1870 which supplies us with a test of what troops may do when advancing under modern fire in any particular formation for those very long distances—as at the Battle of Gravelotte, for instance.

Take the case of Vittoria, which is to my mind a very useful one. If you look at Napier's story of the Battle of Vittoria, where Wellington was engaged in the attack, you will see that Wellington, quite as much as the French, employed columns for the purpose of his advance and manœuvring. He never had the slightest idea, and there is not a conception in the whole of Napier's story of the Peninsular War, of lines being used as bodies for manœuvring purposes. The lines were simply the means by which a broad front of fire was secured, and by which the attack over a very short distance was delivered. At the Battle of Vittoria, the Duke himself moved a solid column of Picton's division right across the front of the army and close up to where the French were. Practically the whole of the army moved down in column before they became directly involved in the attack. There is nothing in the whole story of the Peninsula which represents anything like a line movement in the sense of an advance for a long distance and for manœuvring purposes. The line was simply the actual fighting formation at a time when the fighting went on over a distance of about seventy yards.

At the Battle of Waterloo, Adams' brigade, after delivering in a four-deep line their famous charge, which followed a delivery of fire at less than fifty yards, immediately afterwards in the pursuit formed columns of companies. This was characteristic of all the movements. The column was

as much the English as the French formation for movement. No one dreamt of a long advance in line.

The little broken-up lines which have been suggested by the author of the 'Summer Night's Dream,' whatever you may call them, appear quite as difficult to work by the methods of drill as anything to which you may give the name of 'skirmishing.' The point that has continually, I think, been allowed to drop into the background is that anything that can be called 'line manœuvring,' using the term in the sense in which it was used in Wellington's days, is a thing dependent on drill, upon absolute word of command issued to the whole, and carried out by known and recognized forms of movement, so that the whole force acts with absolute uniformity. That was the condition of the old drill for movements from line to column and from column to line. The 'Summer Night's Dream' single rank lines, or anything else, have each to be moved by their own commander, by themselves, and any unity of action between them must be secured, not by a uniformity of drill formation, but by training and discipline. It seems to me, therefore, that the most vigorous attempt that has been made to get away from the difficulties which met the Germans at the beginning of the 1870 war by abandoning 'skirmishing order' does not escape from that necessity which Von Moltke has set forth in the passage I have referred to. For this method, as much as for our skirmishing, the essential condition of effective unity is a trained habit of self-subordination, of working out 'the intentions of the higher authorities,' as Von Moltke puts it.

What I have tried to lay before you is Von Moltke's own judgment on the lessons which were enforced on the Germans by war—lessons which, under their dire experience of actual loss in battle, were, as he tells us, ingrained into their army. I cannot doubt that it would have been his object, if he had retained his vigour and control over the army, to have trained the army in time of peace on the principle he has explained. If that be the proper training for a modern



army, then we at least in England ought to have an advantage in securing that sort of training which scarcely any other country can possess. I fall back upon my old symbol of ‘ Waterloo won at Eton.’ I hope I shall not offend any other public school, or any gentlemen present who have not been at Eton, because I am not myself an Etonian. I am using the phrase in the form in which Wellington used it. I am thinking only of that method of training which is represented by the eleven working together, and by that hearty co-operation and union which is implied thereby. In the army, I think, it may be best expressed in this way: We none of us can or do in the least feel ourselves either in the position of slave-driver or slave, both of which my philosophic statesman appears to think we must all feel. Each of us feels that he gives an order simply because it is his duty to give that order, and that every order that he receives is given by his superior as a matter of duty, and not as a matter of personal exaltation or personal self-assertion.

Indeed, in no army, and under no conditions, as I believe, has any deviation from this principle been anything else but a cause of weakness for war. In all armies, as in all other human institutions, wrong will sometimes be done. Mistakes will occur of course. Men will use the power which is entrusted to them solely for the carrying out of their duty, sometimes unconsciously, sometimes maliciously under conditions of personal pique and personal feeling. Human nature could not admit of its being otherwise. But the universal feeling of the army, among officers and men alike, is that the conditions of discipline are such as I have described. We do most heartily support authority, in any case whatsoever—even sometimes it may happen in expressing our judgment against a dear friend who has in a moment of temper made a mistake. The whole feeling of the army is with the enforcement of discipline, simply because we are sure that the man, whose duty it is to give an order, requires all the support that can be afforded him in the enforcement of that order.

#### IV

### *THE WRECK OF THE 'BIRKENHEAD'*

(2 A.M., FEBRUARY 26, 1852)

#### A Plain Story of British Discipline.

But, sir, when you'll  
Hear the next fool  
Asking of Flynn,—  
Flynn of Virginia,  
Just you chip in,  
Say you knew Flynn,  
Say that you've been 'yar.

THIS is a day to be much observed in all British households for ever. The record of the doings of Britons at the time of that wreck has stirred blood other than British. We have learnt of late years to look upon Prussia as the nucleus of the proudest military monarchy in Europe, and on the discipline of Prussian soldiers as the rock on which the grandeur and unity of Germany have been built. Yet in 1852 the lesson in discipline which had been taught the world by Britons on February 26 seemed to the King of Prussia so precious that he ordered the record of it to be read out at the head of every regiment in his service. It may be doubted if in the history of the world the like compliment has been ever paid by the monarch of one proud race to the martial qualities and training of another. One thinks that every schoolmaster in Britain who can be detected in having one scholar in his school who does not know the true story of that day ought to be handed over for some such sentence as Judge Jeffreys might have passed for a far more venial offence on an unhappy woman shrinking

before him. Alas! the executions would be too numerous. British history in its heroism and its example is scarcely a subject of British education. So far as my experience goes, most men have heard of the *Birkenhead*; but they would tell you, if pressed, that they believed the men went down standing in their ranks singing 'Rule Britannia' or 'God Save the Queen.' I appeal to the mothers of England to remedy these crimes, and to teach their children the plain unvarnished tale I am going to unfold. For on that February morning the sons of Britain did nothing theatrical. The dignity of the whole scene lies in this, that it consisted in nothing but the calm, ordinary performance of duty at a time when every man had before him the immediate prospect of a watery grave on a rock-bound coast densely covered with fatal seaweeds, in a sea known to be full of sharks; and that, whilst out of a total number of 630 only 193 men were saved, not one woman or child was drowned, because the men, after all further work was impossible, in obedience to the appeal of their officers, remained on the poop of the sinking ship rather than leap into the water, lest they should swamp by their numbers the boat that was carrying off the women and children.

The story is pregnant with suggestions of the course to be taken in such an emergency, and for that cause, even if not for the far higher one of lofty example, it ought to be studied in all its details. We have ample material. That wonderful guide to modern history, the *Times* Index, leads straight to the days of April 7-8, as containing the reports of the survivors, and they are very clear and full. All the muster-rolls and books on board having been lost in the sinking ship, there is some difficulty in ascertaining the exact strength of the detachments. Those I give are chiefly taken from a report which appears in the *Times* of April 7, corrected in some respects by comparison with the 'Annual Register' of that year. The story in the 'Annual Register' is, however, not correct as to these and other details, as a comparison of the Army



Lists of the two years 1851-52 and 1850-51 clearly shows, while the Army Lists themselves show a slip, not difficult to detect, in the list of names. As to the main facts, however, we have ample contemporary evidence. We have the statements of the master of the schooner *Lioness*, Thomas E. Ramsden, who did more than anyone to save all who were rescued; of Dr. Bowen, staff surgeon, who was in the first cutter; of Mr. Richards, master's assistant officer in command of the boats, who was in the second cutter; of Mr. Hire, clerk to the commander, who was for thirteen hours on the wreck, and is said to have displayed the greatest courage and coolness; of Mr. Renwick, chief assistant engineer, who, after starting in the gig, was put into the first cutter, 'no other officer being in her'; of Mr. Archbold, the ship's gunner, who, having been washed overboard, clung to some hay and reached some driftwood which was safely steered to the shore; of Commander Bunce, who was sent in the *Rhadamanthus* by the Commodore of the Station to the scene of the wreck to afford relief; of Captain Wright, 91st Regiment, who, after the death of Lieutenant-Colonel Seton, was, with Lieutenant Girardot of the 42nd, the great hero of the occasion—he reached the shore on the same wood as Mr. Archbold; of Dr. Culhane, who escaped in the gig and brought the first news of the catastrophe; of Cornet Bond, 12th Lancers, who was saved because he possessed one of Mackintosh's life-preservers, 'which may be filled in the water,' a use to which he put it whilst swimming; and of a naval petty officer unnamed.

Further, we have an elaborate despatch from the naval officer in command of the station, Commodore Wyvill, summing up all the evidence he had been able to collect, weighing it, pointing out such mistakes as had been committed, and offering suggestions very useful for future guidance. We have thus as complete a storehouse of facts as could be desired.

Only three boats escaped, and we have evidence from each of them. We have the evidence of those who remained

on the wreck, of some who escaped on driftwood or by swimming, and that of the rescuers. What ought to be known is the complete story which they all tell. It neither agrees with the pictures nor with Sir Francis Doyle's beautiful lines, which seem to be derived rather from the pictures than the facts. I propose presently to give this poem, and show where it differs from the truth, though it has for me an almost sacred charm, since I have heard it most often read with all the force and pathos which the most beautiful voice I ever knew could give to words which, in their record of heroism, stirred the reader to the quick. Those who stood to duty that day on the *Birkenhead* have nothing to lose in honour by the telling of the whole truth.

It was a time when Sir Harry Smith was anxiously awaiting reinforcements in consequence of a serious rising of Kaffirs and Hottentots. Drafts were therefore sent out by the *Birkenhead* for battalions already at the front. If every regiment which contributed a detachment ought not, as I think it ought, to bear on its banners the name 'Birkenhead,' at least the bead roll of honour ought to omit no regiment that was there represented. For what, perhaps, comes home more to a soldier than he can ever bring it home to the minds of those who have not themselves realized the full significance of that wonderful thing—the vital unity of a well-trained regiment—is this, that here was no highly organized and complete unit, but broken fragments, specimens only of that discipline which had been taught at home, put now to the severest of trials—a great emergency, faced, not under their own commanding officer, but under a stranger. Seton, who had only been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel during the voyage, was in immediate command of a detachment of the 74th Regiment, and in general command of other detachments which shall now be named.

'Her Majesty's splendid steamer *Birkenhead*, Captain Salmond, arrived in Simon's Bay on February 17 with reinforcements of troops, consisting of the following drafts for

the different regiments on the frontier : \* 2nd Queen's Foot, Ensign Boyland, 1 sergeant and 50 men ; 6th Regiment, Ensign Metford, 1 sergeant and 60 men ; 12th Lancers, Cornets Bond and Roll, 1 sergeant and 5 men ; 12th Regiment, Lieutenant S. Fairclough, 1 sergeant and 14 men ; 43rd Light Infantry, Lieutenant Girardot, 1 sergeant and 40 men ; 45th, 1 officer (unnamed), † 1 sergeant, and 70 men ; 60th Rifles, 2nd Battalion, 1 sergeant and 40 men, attached to 91st Regiment ; 73rd Regiment, Lieutenants Robinson and Booth and Ensign Lucas, 1 sergeant and 70 men ; 74th Regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel Seton and Ensign Russell, 1 officer (probably warrant) and 60 men ; 91st Regiment, Captain Wright, 1 sergeant and 60 men ; Staff, 2 surgeons and 1 assistant-surgeon ; total, 13 officers, 1 warrant officer, 9 sergeants, 464 rank and file, 2 surgeons, 1 assistant-surgeon, 25 women and 31 children ; 3 women had died in childbirth and 1 of consumption on the passage, and 3 births had taken place.

‘ The women and children were landed forthwith, with the exception of those who were afterwards saved from the wreck. ‡ Lieutenant Fairclough, of the 12th, was also landed, and left behind sick at Simon's Town. The steamer proceeded on her way to Algoa Bay and the Buffalo River at six o'clock on the evening of the 25th. The total number of souls on board was, as accurately as we can ascertain, 638. § The ‘ Annual Register ’ makes it 630, giving 130 officers and seamen for the crew. I continue in the words of Captain Wright's report : ‘ The sea was smooth at the time, and the vessel was steaming at the rate of eight and a half knots an hour. She struck. The rush of water was so great that there is no doubt that most of the men in the lower

\* *Times* report.

† Perhaps a warrant officer. I cannot trace him.

‡ The number of these is nowhere given in the original reports. The ‘ Annual Register ’ makes the women thus saved only seven, and thirteen children, but I have found the account in several respects inaccurate, and don't feel confident as to this.

§ *Times* report.



troop deck were drowned in their hammocks. The rest of the men and all the officers appeared on deck. Major\* Seton called all the officers about him, and impressed upon them the necessity of preserving order and silence among the men. He directed me to take and have executed whatever orders the commander might give me. Sixty men were immediately put on to the chain pumps on the lower after-deck, and told off in three reliefs; sixty men were put to the tackles of the paddle-box boats, and the remainder of the men were brought on to the poop so as to ease the fore part of the ship. She was at this time rolling heavily. The commander ordered the horses to be pitched out of the port gangway, and the cutter to be got ready for the women and children, who had been all collected under the poop awning. As soon as the horses were got over the side, the women and children were passed into the cutter, and, under charge of Mr. Richard, master's assistant, the boat then stood off some 150 yards. Just after they were out of the ship the entire prow broke off at the foremast, the bowsprit going up in the air towards the foretopmast, and the funnel went over the side, carrying away the starboard paddle-box and boat. The paddle-box boat capsized when being lowered. The large boat in the centre of the ship could not be got at.

'It was about twelve or fifteen minutes after she struck that the bow broke off. The men then all went to the poop, and in about five minutes more the vessel broke in two, crosswise, just abaft the engine-room, and the stern part immediately filled and went down. A few men jumped off before she did so, but the greater number remained to the last, and so did every officer belonging to the troops. All the men I put on the tackles, I fear, were crushed when the funnel fell; and the men and officers below at the pumps could not, I think, have reached the deck before the vessel

\* He had probably not known of his own promotion, and was called 'Major' Seton on board. His name only appears as 'Lieutenant-Colonel' in the Army List under the record of his death. He had succeeded to a death vacancy, the date not being given.

broke up and went down. The survivors clung, some to the rigging of the mainmast, part of which was out of the water, and others got hold of floating pieces of wood. I think there must have been about two hundred on the driftwood. I was on a large piece along with five others, and we picked up nine or ten more. The swell carried the wood in the direction of Point Danger. As soon as it got to the weeds and breakers, finding that it would not support all that were on it, I jumped off and swam on shore ; and when the others, and also those that were on the other pieces of wood, reached the shore, we proceeded into the country to try to find a habitation of any sort where we could obtain shelter. Many of the men were naked, and almost all without shoes. . . .’

‘ The order and regularity that prevailed on board from the time the ship struck till she totally disappeared far exceeded anything I thought could be effected by the best discipline ; and it is the more to be wondered at, seeing that most of the soldiers had been but a short time in the service. Everyone did as he was directed, and there was not a murmur or a cry among them till the vessel made her final plunge. I could not name any individual officer who did more than another. All received their orders, and had them carried out as if the men were embarking instead of going to the bottom. There was only this difference, that I never saw any embarkation carried on with so little noise or confusion.

‘ One of the ship’s boats, with the assistant-surgeon of the vessel and eight men, went off and landed about fifteen miles from the wreck. Had the boat remained about the wreck, or returned after landing the assistant-surgeon on Point Danger—about which there was no difficulty—I am quite confident that nearly every man of the two hundred who were on the driftwood might have been saved, for they might have been picked up here and there, where they had got in among the weeds, and landed as soon as eight or

nine were got into the boat. When most of the driftwood stuck in the weeds, the distance to the shore was not more than 400 yards, and as, by taking a somewhat serpentine course, I managed to swim in without getting foul of the rock or being tumbled over by a breaker, there is no doubt the boat might have done so also. One fact I cannot help mentioning : *When the vessel was just going down, the commander called out, " All those that can swim jump overboard, and make for the boats."* Lieutenant Girardot and myself were standing on the stern part of the poop. *We begged the men not to do as the commander had said, as the boat with the women must be swamped. Not more than three made the attempt.'*

No doubt, when the surplus men not employed at the pumps and tackles were collected on the poop, they were regularly formed up awaiting orders, but, as far as possible, every man that could be employed in any useful work was engaged on it. Those who died, as Captain Wright has described, at their work ought not to be forgotten. Captain Wright, who was the senior left after ' Major ' Seton was killed by the fall of a part of the wreck, has told us how most of the infantry were employed, but I have omitted to record his own proceedings after he landed. These are thus mentioned in Commodore Wyvill's report :

' Captain Wright, of the 91st Regiment, who landed on a piece of wreck, lost no time in procuring and sending assistance to his fellow-sufferers. He walked several miles along the coast, obtained the use of a whale-boat, and returned again, to give all the relief in his power, taking charge of all who landed,' and, as we hear from other reports, saving many men among those who struggled into the weeds.

The 12th Lancer men, under Cornet Bond and a sergeant, were employed in getting out the horses, which was done successfully. As Cornet Bond says that *all* the officers were employed with gangs of men at the pumps, apparently the surplus on the poop was at this time, and until Captain



Wright and Lieutenant Girardot joined them after work had become useless, left under the charge of non-commissioned officers. It is to be hoped that the tackle of Her Majesty's troopships is in better order now than it was then ; for while a naval petty officer mentions that one of the paddle-box boats could not be lowered because the pin of the davits was rusted in and would not come out, Cornet Bond records of the other that ' A number of soldiers under the master tried to haul out the paddle-box boat on the port side. This was nearly hoisted out, when the tackle broke, and it remained fixed in air. One of the gigs into which Mr. Rolt, of the 12th Lancers, and some seamen had entered was swamped because one of the ropes broke.' Evidently there was, as usual, inadequate boat accommodation even had all gone well, but at least half of the boats which the men attempted to lower were lost because the tackle was defective.

All the women and children were in the one cutter under the charge of Mr. Richards. There was no reason, therefore, after that had been safely moved off, why men might not hope for life if they could get assistance from those who were on the spars and in the other boats. Cornet Bond tell us that after the poop went down, or 'lurched forward,' 'the sea was covered with struggling forms, while the cries, piercing shrieks, and shouting for the boats, were awful.' Probably the cries and shrieks were due to the work of sharks, for he says : ' I swam two miles to the shore. Two men swimming near me were swallowed by sharks.' Five horses reached the land. Some were probably eaten by sharks, some caught in the horrible kelpweed which covered the shore, and in it either drowned or eaten, but some at all events gained footing before the men did so, for Cornet Bond writes : ' After struggling through the seaweed and reaching a beaten track, I saw my horse standing in the water on the beach.' ' Lieutenant Girardot, of the 43rd,' he continues, ' on a raft\* with about nine

\* *I.e.*, driftwood.

men soon arrived, and landed at 7 p.m. Two or three men were thrown by the raging surf on the rock off a spar, very much cut and bruised, and entirely naked.' Next day some came ashore on the paddle-box boats which had floated up to the surface. One of these was full of water, the other keel uppermost. One ship's quartermaster came in the boat which was full of water. Seven others, being naked, had died in it of cold. He had his clothes on. 'Rafts\* reached the shore with bodies lashed on them, quite dead.' Other bodies were washed up mauled by sharks. There appears to have been on board a regular raft, carried for such an emergency. One could hardly have been made in the time, yet we are told that 'all were clinging to *the raft* till it broke up.' Forty-five men clung to the maintopsail yard, where they remained for twelve or thirteen hours. It was a ghastly watch, for at first there had been more men on the yard; but as Mr. Hire, the commander's clerk, who was with them all the time, reports, 'some dropped off during the night,' some attempted to reach the shore with other parts of the wreck. His statement, like all the others, is cold and business-like. He makes no attempt to describe the horrors of that long delay whilst shivering men watched one after another of their comrades, perishing of cold, drop off from the perch to which they could no longer cling, or saw others attempt the passage to the shore, most of them naked, and doomed to be clutched by some of the swarming sharks, or to become one of the dead bodies that, lashed to spars, were dashed by the surf upon the shore.

But it is time to follow the three boats which, thanks to the noble sacrifice demanded by Captain Wright and Lieutenant Girardot of the men on the poop, were able to clear off in safety, crowded, but not overcrowded, one with women and children, the other two with men. On that coast the surf beats incessantly, independent of wind or weather, so that though the night was fine, starlight,

\* *I.e.*, driftwood.

and calm at sea, they found, on reaching Cape Hanglip, the part of the coast for which at first all three boats steered together, that, rock-bound as it was, they could not attempt a landing through the raging surf. At daybreak, therefore, they put out to sea again; and, after beating about for some time, the first cutter, apparently the most heavily laden, was left behind by the other two boats. It was the first picked up by the schooner *Lioness*, at 11 a.m. on the 26th. About an hour afterwards the same schooner picked up the second cutter with the women and children. This cutter had rigged up a woman's cloak as a sail. The gig, which had been made up with a strong crew of nine men in all, under Assistant-Surgeon Culhane, in order that it might be able to go ashore more quickly than the others, and so bring help, was now out of sight. Accordingly, the schooner steered for the wreck, where it picked up the survivors. Meantime the gig, after rowing for fifty miles, had found a safe landing and reached the shore. The steps which, in consequence of Assistant-Surgeon Culhane's report, were taken by Commodore Wyvill, and that officer's general view of all the facts, may be best recorded in his own words :

' At half-past two o'clock in the afternoon of the 27th of February Mr. Culhane, assistant-surgeon of the *Birkenhead*, arrived at Simon's Town by land to report to me the loss of his ship near to Point Danger—that two boats with, as he stated, the only survivors were cruising about at a distance from the land. I immediately despatched Commander Bunce, of Her Majesty's ship *Castor*, with twenty-five men (to form boats' crews), in the *Rhadamanthus*, the only steamer in port, to the scene of the wreck. That evening he fell in with the schooner *Lioness*, of Algoa Bay. This vessel had on board the persons who were in the boats and forty others, whom they had succeeded in taking off the maintopsail yard of the ship; altogether 116 in number, as per lists. It being calm, and the schooner some distance



from this anchorage, the *Rhadamanthus* towed her in, and proceeded afterwards to Point Danger in search of any people who might yet be clinging to the spars and pieces of wreck floating about, also for any who might have landed. An examination of the coast having been made for upwards of twenty miles by land and sea, and no other persons being found except those who had landed during the night and day of the wreck on Point Danger, the *Rhadamanthus* received them on board and returned to this port on the morning of the 1st inst. The persons so saved were sixty-eight in number, of whom six were officers (four military and two naval). They reached the land by swimming and on pieces of wreck, etc. These, with nine others who escaped in the gig, and those who were rescued by the schooner, make the total saved 193.

' 4. It appears that Her Majesty's ship *Birkenhead* was duly pricked off on the chart at eight o'clock on the night of the 25th within False Bay by the master, Mr. Brodie, and officer of the watch, Mr. Spear, second master, that the course was shaped S.S.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E., Cape Hanglip giving a berth of about four miles. The man at the wheel, John Haynes, A.B., from ten o'clock to twelve o'clock of the first watch, states that he steered that course with directions not to go to the eastward of it. A leadsman was on the paddle-box, and lookout men were placed. The night was fine, starlight, and calm, but a long swell setting in on shore. The land was seen all the night from three to four points on the port bow. At about ten minutes before two o'clock, in the middle watch, the leadsman got soundings in twelve or thirteen fathoms, of which he gave notice to the officer of the watch. Before he could get another cast of the lead the ship struck, and he found seven fathoms alongside; there were two fathoms water under the bows and eleven by the stern.

' 5. It appears that Mr. Salmond, who was roused by the shock, went on deck, inquired the time—a few minutes past two o'clock—and the course steered. It was reported to be S.S.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E., which he stated was quite correct. He

immediately ordered the engines to be stopped, the small bower anchor to be let go, the quarter boats to be lowered and lie off alongside the ship, the paddle-box boats to be got out, and a turn astern to be given to the engines. He ordered the military officers, who were all in attendance (Major Seton, of the 74th Regiment, and Captain Wright, of the 91st), to send troops to the chain pumps. The orders were implicitly obeyed and perfect discipline maintained. So soon as Mr. Salmond heard that there was water in the ship, he directed the women and children to be put into a cutter in charge of Mr. Richards, master's assistant, which was done. In ten minutes after the first concussion, and while the engines were turning astern, the ship struck again under the engine-room, bulging the side in several feet and tearing open the bottom. The water rushed in, drowned the fires, and stopped the engines; the engineer, Mr. Kenwick, and stokers making their escape to the upper deck. Instantly the ship broke in two abaft the mainmast and sank, leaving the maintopmast and topsail yard only visible above water. Up to this awful moment the resolution and coolness of all hands were remarkable: Mr. Salmond gave his orders with much presence of mind to the last.

' 7. There is no doubt that the course of the ship was shaped to hug the land too closely, and, as it does not appear that either Mr. Salmond or the master had attended on deck from ten o'clock in the first watch until the accident occurred, it would infer much inattention and extreme neglect of duty on their parts; and when soundings were first struck, had the helm been put to port, this ill-fated ship might have escaped the danger. It is much to be lamented that not an officer has been saved who can give any satisfactory information on these points.

' 8. It is also deeply to be deplored that a young officer, Mr. Richards, master's assistant, should have been the only executive in command of the boats; and but for the circumstance of their leaving the scene of the wreck before day-

light, the landing-place discovered on Point Danger by those who reached the shore on rafts would have shown itself, and the hapless individuals who were clinging to the pieces of the wreck and spars might have been picked off and carried to the shore by the boats, and thus many more lives would have been saved.' Also, when the schooner visited the wreck, had the cutters examined the coast in the locality it is probable they might have found a few others. I can only attribute this to a fatal error of judgment and to the excited state of the people in the boats under such appalling circumstances.'

On which it is to be observed that apparently Commodore Wyvill left the Admiralty to draw their own conclusions from the statements he enclosed—(1) As to the inadequacy in any event of the boat accommodation ; (2) as to the unsatisfactory nature of a raft which broke up immediately it was launched in an absolutely smooth sea ; (3) as to the rotten condition of the tackle which caused the swamping of one paddle-box boat and one gig ; (4) as to the defective system on board which allowed rust to accumulate to such a degree that the other paddle-box boat could not be launched, even if it was not due to similar neglect that the large boat in the centre of the ship was unavailable. Further, it is to be noted that, if it was a mistake, it was at least a noble one, which despatched only two very junior naval officers in the boats, so that all the rest, including the commander, of whom it is specially noted in the evidence ' that he might easily have saved himself,' died at their posts on the sinking ship, doing, *like all the crew*, all that could be done to remedy the errors of the night, and the slackness of discipline which had tested neither tackle nor the cleanness of the davit-bolts. Moreover, there is a striking second statement by Captain Wright, who had been on the coast before, which rather leads to the conclusion that the steersman was misled by a fire lighted on shore, which had to an extraordinary extent the appearance of the Cape Agulha



lighthouse. Such are the facts. Now compare with them this poetic rendering of them :

Right on our flank the crimson sun went down,  
The deep sea rolled around in dark repose,  
When, like the wild shriek from some captured town,  
A cry of women rose.

The stout ship *Birkenhead* lay hard and fast,  
Caught without hope upon a hidden rock ;  
Her timbers thrilled as nerves, when through them passed  
The spirit of that shock.

And ever like base cowards who leave their ranks  
In danger's hour, before the rush of steel,  
Drifted away disorderly, the planks  
From underneath her keel.

Confusion spread, for though the coast seemed near,  
Sharks hovered thick along that white sea-brink ;  
The boats could hold ?—not all—and it was clear  
She was about to sink.

' Out with those boats and let us haste away,'  
Cried one, ' ere yet yon sea the bark devours !'  
The man thus clamouring was, I scarce need say,  
No officer of ours.

We knew our duty better than to care  
For such loose babblers, and made no reply,  
Till our good colonel gave the word, and there  
Formed us in line to die.

There rose no murmur from the ranks, no thought,  
By shameful strength, unhonoured life to seek.  
Our post to quit we were not trained, nor taught  
To trample down the weak.

So we made women with their children go ;  
The oars ply back agen, and yet agen,  
Whilst inch by inch the drowning ship sank low  
Still under steadfast men.

What follows why recall ? The brave who died  
Died without flinching in the bloody surf ;  
They sleep as well beneath that purple tide  
As others under turf.

There are three other stanzas which, to my humble thinking, do not add force to that noble ending. All that is best in the poetry and thought of the poem is good and

true as ever, but the actual scene is falsely painted altogether. The men were not standing, as here represented, drawn up in line waiting quietly whilst the boats, crowded with women, went to and fro to the shore. The suggestion is that of a single regiment under its colonel formed up under his influence to die. There were only detachments, most of them under boy ensigns. Even the 'major' who had been in command was dead at the time when the one captain and lieutenant called on the men to make their splendid sacrifice. The suggestion as to the boats and 'no officer of ours' is altogether unfair to Salmond, who, though he, as in duty bound, released the soldiers from his naval authority at a moment when it was no longer applicable, remained himself to the last, calmly giving such orders as were possible, and lost his life by doing so. The ship did not sink inch by inch, but broke up almost at once; and even the poop sank within less than twenty minutes of the striking of the ship. If the three stanzas, 'Out with those boats,' 'We knew our duty,' 'So we made women,' had been brought into accord with the truth, they would have been more worthy of some of their grand comrade stanzas, especially the seventh and ninth. Even as it is, however, with all its historical blemishes, it is a poem that ought to be known better than it is; and as I have been abusing the schoolmasters, perhaps it may encourage them to know it better if I venture to supply a scene in which one of their order did bring the story before some young men, who were at least a little struck by it, as eyewitnesses shall record. One of them first describes the reader thus:

'Which of us can forget the slight bent frame; the head crowned with the silvered locks, which were indeed a crown of glory; the eyes that seemed to have kept watch more than their threescore years over man's mortality, and to have learnt therefrom a lesson of immortal hope; the face—we say it reverently—as of a Man of Sorrows; the voice, trembling in its earnestness, and piercing, though low-pitched, as the soul within him burned and the fire kindled?'

‘Enthusiasm is scarcely the word to describe the feelings of the survivors of that band of young men, undergraduates and junior graduates, who on one unique occasion so far forgot the decorum of a University lecture-room as to leap to their feet with one accord, and, while many eyes were wet with emotion, to cheer again and again the professor who had just given as an illustration of devotion to duty the story of the sinking of the *Birkenhead*.’

Another who was there writes : ‘The version of Sir F. Doyle’s lines which your father read ended thus :

‘They sleep as well beneath that purple tide  
As others under turf.’

The strain on our feelings had been growing more and more tense as verse after verse was read, in that voice almost broken with earnestness, and yet so clear. As the last verses came you might have heard here and there, from young men not used to the melting mood, distinct sobs of emotion. For my own part I could not pretend that I was not really crying. As the last word fell from your father’s lips, a hush came over us ; we almost seemed to be in the presence of the noble dead. A pause of a few seconds, and then all in a body we leapt up, some even on the forms, and cheered. It was a thing such as I never saw and never heard of, a thing I shall never forget as long as my senses and memory remain.’



V

*UNDISCIPLINED HASTE FOR NEWS*

Apropos of the Egyptian Campaign of 1882.

THE campaign in Egypt has brought many questions to a practical test. Among these there is, however, none which more directly and personally concerns every Englishman and Englishwoman than this one: Do you wish that your newspapers should supply you with facts? or do you wish that they should engage in eager competition against one another which can compose the most taking and tasty fiction at moments when your nerves are so strung with excitement that fictitious stories of what might have happened to your friends will afford a certain half-pleasurable, half-painful excitement?

The matter is from every aspect a grave one. If those who specially claim for themselves the title to be the 'leaders and guides of society' are to get into the habit of not merely tolerating inevitable human error for inserting hasty and imperfect reports, but of furnishing statements which are composed before the event has taken place, or pictures which are drawn before a sketch can have reached England, an element of falsehood, of mere sale-hunting and money-hunting is introduced in a most dangerous quarter—in the very places to which we look for the letting in of daylight into the dark corners of intrigue, of spurious trading, or of spurious patriotism.

I do not enlarge upon this wide aspect of the question, because the newspapers themselves will indeed be blind if they treat an appeal to them from this point of view as

hostile. The more any man believes in the advantages of daylight, of publicity, and the more he sees that under our present conditions of life the only hope of daylight lies in the free action of a free press, the more anxious must he be that there shall be no systematic substitution of well-written fiction for what is at least the result of an honest effort to arrive at the truth.

At any rate, it is well that everyone who reads a newspaper should understand that the question is in their hands, and that sooner or later the newspapers must and will supply the thing that their readers want, whether that be as accurate a statement of facts as circumstances permit, or as early and as racy fiction as the ingenuity of the pens of ready writers can devise.

At present, to an extent of which the public in general has no conception, the telegraph has introduced an era of ingenious romance which has often about as much relation to fact as Mother Shipton's or Zadkiel's forecasts have to history.

The worst, the most deliberate, and the most grievous offenders in this respect are the illustrated papers, including at least some of the highest class. Anyone who is in the habit of glancing occasionally at the various penny illustrated periodicals which scarcely profess to have any reputation to lose and are brought into the market palpably and almost avowedly merely to get a sale, must have seen for a long time past how rampant the habit to which I refer has become among them. For the edification of the class to which they appeal, no sooner has some story, such as the Defence of Rorke's Drift, or the Charge of the Heavy Cavalry on August 28, 1882, at Massawah, become popular, than these papers are to be seen in all the small print-shop windows supplying sketches of 'Major Chard at Rorke's Drift,' or 'Sir Baker Russell leading the cavalry at Massawah,' composed in the back rooms of Fleet Street or the Strand long before it would be possible for the most zealous correspondent to have sent home from Africa the

slightest sketch of either. Hitherto, however, the malady in this respect has been confined to very insignificant periodicals, from which it may be safely assumed that in the long-run the world will not learn to judge of men or books or deeds. The case is very different when one of the most popular and successful of our illustrated newspapers condescends to similar devices.

The practice has, however, now apparently become established for at least one of these to send out a very clever and hard-working artist to the seat of war, and then scarcely to use his sketches at all, substituting for them productions drawn from the fancy of their excellent wood-engravers, which have less relation to anything that ever happened than Mr. Tenniel's cartoons have to actual scenes in Parliament or elsewhere. To those who have looked over the artist's sketches in Egypt or in West Africa, it is specially provoking to see the travesties that have taken their place, or rather that have anticipated their arrival.

Now, for all this the public is mainly responsible. The habits of popular feeling are the chief cause of this substitution of fancy sketches for real ones. Even from Egypt it is scarcely possible for a sketch to arrive and be reproduced in London so as to appear under three weeks or a month. But by that time other incidents have taken the place, in the public mind, of those actions of which sketches have been sent home. The present has already overborne and to some extent buried the past. If, therefore, the public will be content, as they at present are, to take the dreams and fancies of London wood-engravers as substitutes for the realities of war, they can much more easily have such dishes served to them hot and hot whilst the excitement lasts; and there can be no doubt that the lucrative practice will spread to the reports of other events and the sketches of other than military scenes. Adulteration will have taken a new start. Where shall we find place to expose the adulterations of preserves and pickles when the columns of the denouncing papers are themselves specimens of adulterations in their



own kind as gross, and induced by the same kind of temptation, as that to which the manufacturers of turnips into strawberry jam are exposed?—the rush of competition, the wish for a sale, and the increased facility for making money.

In its own place, and put to its proper uses, there is no such potent handmaid of truth as a 'shaping spirit of the imagination.' If the aim of the home artist or of the home writer be to realize the scene as it has taken place abroad, and if he has the knowledge and the faculty to give life and character to the actions he has to portray, a more complete and a more true view of the general grouping of a number of incidents or facts may very often be obtained at a distance than on the spot. Many instances of this have occurred in various newspapers, especially noteworthy being some very able articles that have appeared in the *Times*. Some of these, though avowedly written in London, impressed the best-informed officers in Egypt with the accuracy and completeness with which the facts had been mastered and compiled. But, unfortunately, for the most part the artists employed on home work have no knowledge of the type of scenes to assist their fancy.

Some quaint illustrations of this occurred in certain drawings of the Ashantee War which were made under the direction of a very able soldier, lately deceased, by a great artist. In his first sketches, in carrying out the suggestions made to him by Colonel —, the artist represented the officers, as they stood side by side with their men, pointing their pistols at the Ashantees. The Colonel, on receiving the sketch, remarked that no doubt some very young and inexperienced officers might have thus employed their pistols on particular occasions; that it was scarcely fair to represent an exceptional act of folly as the representative feature of the fighting of a successful army; that a moment's reflection would suggest that the pistol was a less efficient weapon than the ordinary breech-loading rifle, and that, if an officer's fighting consisted in using an inferior weapon, it was a pity to pay more for him than for a private

soldier. He added that for his part, as far as he had seen, he believed that the officers generally had their pistols in their belts, not in their hands, and that most of them simply carried a stick. Whereupon the artist, in his next attempt, represented an officer whacking a savage with a stick. Ultimately, in this particular instance, the artist, realizing his incapacity to put himself in the position of any human being who did not wield a brush, but was employing brain, and eye, and voice, and all his faculties, in the leading and ordering of men, submitted to represent the scene as it was described to him by one who had really borne a part in it, and, being a master of his own art, produced some of the most perfect war pictures that have perhaps ever been drawn. But the home artists who produce the particular pictures of which we complain often appear, from the results they actually furnish, to combine the most absolute incapacity for realizing any life outside a distance of the four-mile radius from Charing Cross, with the most sublime confidence in their own capacity to improve upon facts as they are.

I have no hesitation in saying that every alteration that has been introduced into the artist's sketches sent back from Egypt, and every fancy sketch that has been inserted in anticipation of them, has tended directly to falsify the popular conception of the war. If the paper which he served would repeat the experiment it made during the Ashantee campaign, and would give, with the half-apologetic air that it then employed, 'a facsimile' of its artist's drawings as they were sent home, at least one step would be taken to correct false impressions. The incident, as I recall it, was very amusing. We had been travelling through a dense forest, with snatches here and there of beautiful glades of rampant, over-luxuriant flowers, rich in their colouring, their growth, and their texture, but nowhere was there anything but crowding, close-packed foliage that seemed on all sides to choke the view. Of this the artist on the spot had given a faithful reproduction. The artist

who had to reproduce his work at home felt the absence of distance and middle distance to be hopelessly inartistic, and looked upon it as the blunder of a young hand to have crowded the lines of soldiers densely in between the masses of tropical vegetation. Accordingly, wide space and breadth and air were introduced in Fleet Street. All the characteristics of the scene had disappeared, and, except in the one facsimile so condescendingly given, we were none of us able to recognize the scenes we had passed through.

The desert has characteristics as peculiar as the dense forest. It is almost as hard to conform to the orthodoxies of Fleet Street at El Magfar as at Amoaful. But when orthodoxy is made to replace truth, it were well that its nature should be plainly stated, not 'From sketches by our artists,' but 'Egypt and war according to the canons of art as determined in Fleet Street.'

If the errors of any illustrated papers have been chiefly committed at home, it must be confessed that the daily newspapers have been afflicted by a series of hot-haste despatches which, in their tendency to anticipate events, have fully rivalled the fancy work of the London artists. A newspaper correspondent in the field can only afford to have one eye devoted to the events which are occurring under his nose. His remaining faculties of vision and most of his thought have to be concentrated upon the publishing office at home. A despatch which contains 'news' sufficiently lively and sufficiently unexpected to make it answer to bring out a special edition of his paper is worth almost anything to him and his employers. A carefully sifted and accurately weighed report of the subject-matter of the 'news,' sent a few hours later, is almost valueless. Pity, then, the position of an unfortunate correspondent who arrived, let me say, at El Magfar early in the morning of Sir Garnet's fight there on August 24! It was a day of considerable incident, of a story worth telling, but it was not over till six or seven o'clock in the evening, having begun at about 7 a.m. To wait till the facts had occurred



would have been to lose all chance of sending an early message. As Sir Garnet had started at 3 a.m., everyone in Ismailia knew enough to furnish matter for something to telegraph. How is a poor correspondent, whose zeal has roused him in the middle of the night, who has been able to get no breakfast at such an hour in his hotel, to decide when to abandon the attempt to know the facts, and when to begin recording them? The probability is that the sooner he abandons the field where the fight is going on, and rides back to telegraph from Ismailia, the better service he does, at least to the sale of his paper. The correspondent who conscientiously sees the day out, who endeavours to understand it, who rides about to the different parts of the field and finds out what has really taken place, probably discovers by the time he reaches the telegraph-office that a brother of the art, with a larger faith in the capacities of his own fancy, has anticipated him in obtaining the ear of the public in London, and has given an account of the facts with which his own will not conveniently tally, so that, as a hundred people will have read the first account for every ten who will take the trouble to read the second, he finds himself consigned to the position of an historian who conflicts with that great standard of truth—the current opinion of the British public.

It is no easy matter to get at the facts of the simplest incident of war. Patience, care, a determination to be just to every actor, to weigh fairly all evidence, a cautious comparison of hours, close examination of the ground, a realization of the all-important difference that exists between fact and inference, and of the tendency of all men to confuse fact and inference, a rigid exclusion of the impressions formed by actors on one side of a large field of what was going on at some distant point when all their attention was absorbed by the work in hand—all these are needed to give to Truth her scope and power to bring out that natural greatness, unity and consistency of hers by which, for him who chooses to follow after her at all hazards, she will surely prevail, in

the long-run, over her counterfeits. But for the undisciplined thirsters after news she never does and never will prevail. The blunder of the hasty correspondent, the bazaar rumour that has been telegraphed to-day to be contradicted to-morrow, these become the basis of an incredible number of stories that run current long afterwards throughout the country, all of which in the Palace of Truth, if it could be set up, would vanish, and, like the baseless fabric of a dream, leave not a wrack behind.

Certainly in no campaign that I have known, or of which I have been able to ascertain the facts, have these baseless rumours been so numerous as they have in the case of this Egyptian expedition. It would be hopeless to take them in any specific order, chronological or other, but I propose to select, almost at haphazard, a few instances. Perhaps the most ludicrous and the most false stories owed their origin to the nervous fears and fertile imaginations of the non-Mohammedan population of Cairo, acted upon by the ready credulity of the Mohammedans.

We had been only a few days in Cairo when some correspondent imagined, or found someone to imagine for him, a series of outrages upon our troops in the streets which never took place. Next, to redress the balance, he imagined that Sir Garnet had announced to Sultan Pasha that he would bombard the Arab quarter of the town if these outrages did not stop. It is amazing that so startling a statement should have passed without further inquiry. It would almost seem as if the world were beginning to realize that a correspondent's efforts to supply 'news' do not necessarily result in anything on which even a further inquiry can be safely based.

When the procession of the holy carpet passed through the streets of Cairo, it was announced that so hostile was the feeling of the Mohammedan population that the camel and his guides had deserted the line of procession followed by the English troops, and had taken a different route. Now, the camel had strictly followed the line agreed upon

and marked out beforehand, and the sole foundation for the rumour was that the camel-driver had said to Zohrab Bey, the officer of the Khedive's household attached to Sir Garnet's staff: 'The camel does not like to go this way; he wants to go by another road because there are so many infidels about!' To which Zohrab had replied by rebuking the man's impertinence, and the incident was over. At the time when these and other stories of the overt hostility of the natives were being told, officers and men were continually riding or walking, singly or in parties of two or three, through all the most densely crowded native parts of the town. I can answer for myself that the only inconveniences from which I suffered were the tendency of the native to imagine that he always knew what you wanted better than you knew it yourself, and his efforts to anticipate your wishes by pointing out the road by which you were to go or the article you were to buy.

To one who has a liking for walking or riding slowly through the streets of a town to watch the ways and habits of the inhabitants, Cairo is certainly a most provoking place. Scarcely is it possible to imagine a gathering of human beings which more tempts you to spend time in watching its ever-varied features—the tiny shops, the quaint bazaars, the stately mosques, the ever-moving, strangely-diversified colours of the streets, the stream of life that seems always on the jog. Yet, venture to walk, and you have not gone ten steps before half a dozen donkey-boys have surrounded you, half a dozen more with their donkeys have scented you their prey from afar, and are pouncing down on you with their 'Want donkey, sar? Goot donkey, sar? This *goot* donkey, sar!' the latter '*goot*' having become plaintively reproachful, as though your passing on were a personal insult to both donkey and donkey-boy. All through your walk, at every street corner, on passing every hotel, and at many other points, especially whenever you have settled down into quiet observation and want to be let alone, the same persecution to give employment awaits you. Dis-



gusted with the attempt at walking, try to ride! Start on horseback! Instantly before you have gone a hundred yards, a dozen boys are upon you: 'Want me, sar? Going to Shepheard's Hotel, sar? Hold your horse, sar?' The conviction seems to have seized upon every boy in Cairo, and half the men, that you must want to get off your horse as soon as you have begun your ride. In vain you repeat the rather prompt, emphatic, and not too courteous dismissal of 'Imshi!' (Get away!). If—which by no means follows—your tormentors for the moment take their departure, directly your attention has ceased to be upon them they are after you again, and the moment you pause for a second in your ride there is a violent rush from many sides at your unfortunate horse's head. It is all you can do to prevent a free fight for the right to snatch at his bridle, and your utmost efforts will not prevent a babbling squabble too loud for some time to permit your protest to be heard. You abuse and dismiss your resolute volunteer attendants. No matter! If you don't pay much attention for some time, and ride at all at a foot's pace, you find, as soon as you look over your shoulder, that a small crowd of volunteer horse-holders has gathered behind you.

I have myself, I confess, been worried beyond expression by this persistency. It at first seems nothing; but the aggravation of it grows each time greater. You ride away at as brisk a trot as the crowded state of the roads will permit; you turn corners sharply, and try to become lost in the maze of streets. No sooner do you pull up, and begin to watch a carpenter at his lathe working with the quaint bowstring that he plies so dexterously for the shaping of his turnery, than you become aware that one young urchin has sneaked up after you through the colonnade on the opposite side of the street, and another, seeing him follow, is in the shadow of the pillars. At last, fairly nettled, you charge after the boys and threaten them with your fly-whisp or riding-whip. They rush away for the moment in apparent terror, but in a few minutes the desire

for possible *backshish*, in case you should somewhere or other dismount, is too strong, and they are after you again.

When, after such experiences as these, you come home to find a correspondent reporting that the population of Cairo is so fanatical that they will have no dealings with officers or men, certainly it is 'news' to you. When you find that almost at the same time another has reported that in the great University of Cairo, the greatest or second greatest of the Mohammedan world, he saw on a recent visit no fanaticism at all, one wonders where he expected to see it. On the walls? In the air? Or a sacred deposition in the professor's chairs? Certainly the necessities of 'news' manufacture are wonderful!

We have just passed through the first campaign in which the telegraph wire has directly connected the headquarters of an English army in the field with Pall Mall. The effect of this has been that even our generals have been compelled to supply information about the events as they took place before they could by any possibility have sifted all the evidence that is necessary to determine the facts, under the embarrassing conditions which war presents. It is a most provoking thing to find how persistently engrained the belief in a story becomes after the first report of it has reached London, no matter how complete the evidence against it may be afterwards. Potent influences are enlisted against the truth—the vanity of numbers, who have staked their reputation upon 'I told you so,' upon 'history repeating itself,' and the like. These would be all upset if the truth of the real facts were established, and the fictions which have taken their place in the public mind dissipated. Able editors have composed leaders discussing the imaginary events. Political partisans have made the supposed facts subserve the great end of proving either the absolute infallibility of Her Majesty's present Ministers, or their absolute incapacity for doing anything right. No doubt if the facts had been known, those who drew from the false story the proof of infallibility would have drawn

it all the same. Those who believe in the absolute incapacity of any Liberal Government would have deduced it from any report. Yet we still retain in form a pretence of arguing political questions, not to a foregone conclusion, but from facts, so far as to be annoyed when the very facts we have chosen to throw in the face of our opponents turn out to have no reality at all. Hence the misfortune which our undisciplined haste for news imposes on us is, that the story which comes to be believed, in defence of which every prejudice is enlisted, is either the hasty message of some impetuous correspondent, or the scarcely more accurate telegraphic summary which a general is compelled to send off to satisfy the home craving for news, whilst his whole attention is taken up with the fresh events which are developing, and when he has to trust to hurried reports often based unconsciously on inference rather than on fact.

To take two striking instances of this: In the first telegraphic report of Tel-el-Kebir there can be no question that the services of the Highland Brigade were inadequately reported. It was at least a generous error. The general had himself passed completely through the position taken by the Highland Brigade. He was supposed in Ashantee to have shown an especial partiality for one of the regiments of Sir Archibald Alison's force, the Black Watch. He must have been surrounded by Highlanders at the time that he penned his despatch. It is very easy to do justice to services which you see. It is by no means so common to be able to attach due weight to the reports of others. A staff officer had seen the Royal Irish already cross the ditch, while some of the Highland Brigade were still detained by a difficult part of the works they had to assail. The general commanding the division had reported warmly on the services of the Irish soldiers. To do justice, or a little more than justice, to the gallant soldiers of the island which, whatever its faults, has sent many brave sons to stand shoulder to shoulder with Englishmen and Scotchmen on many a hard-



fought field ; to give to Englishmen and Scotchmen a cause of fellow-feeling and of kindness towards a race of fellow-countrymen who have of late only too often given occasion to far different emotions ; to give to Irishmen a cause of pride in sons serving in the English ranks—this seemed a chance at which any genuine patriot might clutch somewhat eagerly.

But to heal wounds one has to exclude the parasites that feed upon and fester them. If the germs of disease had a place in the British Parliament or the Dublin Corporation, it would be strange if they did not condemn the author of the antiseptic treatment. That Irish members should be furious with the general for doing simple justice to their countrymen and for leading them to victory is intelligible enough. It is not surprising that such a paper as the *Freeman's Journal* should in revenge make statements as to the feelings and desires of Sir Garnet Wolseley in relation to Ireland which, within my direct personal knowledge, are the exact converse of what they actually were at the time referred to. But what is a little curious is the tone of grievance assumed in certain letters that have appeared, because the general's later and fuller despatch about Tel-el-Kebir did justice to the Highland Brigade and to the Marines as well as to the Irish regiments. As a matter of fact, it is now certain that the Highland Brigade attack was delivered upon the works of Tel-el-Kebir at least ten minutes earlier than the attack of the 2nd Brigade ; or, to put it another way, that at the time when fire was commenced upon the two brigades the Highlanders were 200 yards distant from the work, the 2nd Brigade at least 800 yards from it. To prohibit a general from correcting his reports as the evidence he receives becomes more complete, to treat the first impression which the English public have taken up as the infallible standard of truth, this is indeed to determine that England shall always be the place

Where nothing is examined, tried,  
But as 'tis rumoured so believed !

These are doubtless small matters, but the habit of putting prejudice up as the determining standard of truth is disastrous in itself, and must spread to more important questions.

The case, however, in which the most inveterate prejudice appears to have established itself is that of the fight at Kassassin, when General Graham was attacked by the Egyptian forces, and when, after repelling their attacks and ordering the cavalry to advance to his support, he advanced and drove the Egyptians before him at the time when the cavalry were working round the enemy's flank, and shortly before they delivered the splendid charge which has become historical.

Just as during the Battle of Waterloo panic-stricken camp-followers, panic-stricken Dutch-Belgians and other fugitives, carried alarm into Brussels, and even caused a heavy fall of stock in London before the issue of the battle was known, so it happens in almost every successful fight, great or small, that some of the less worthy members of a victorious force at the earliest stages of a fight make their way to the rear, and being, of course, the first people to reach those who are at the next post on the line, find it necessary to cover their own flight by the most high-flown statements of the utter ruin which they have seen to be impending, and from which they have escaped. Thus it constantly happens that the mere fact that a fight is going on in front produces the most alarming rumours among those who are not engaged. In the case of the fight at Kassassin, a cowardly interpreter and a soldier servant became panic-stricken and deserted. They, I believe, conveyed their fears also to a cavalry soldier who happened to be sent to the rear. Thus, on the afternoon of the 28th, the most alarmist rumours reached the headquarters of the Cavalry Division and of the 1st—General Willis's—Division, and thence passed down the line of posts. When men's minds are in the sort of state which these rumours produce, the conviction that all has gone wrong soon becomes so established that everything takes its colour from that belief.

Meantime General Graham, seeing the opportunity which was open to the cavalry, and realizing the importance of teaching the enemy a severe lesson for his temerity in attacking the post, used the authority which had been expressly put into his hands for that end, and sent a despatch ordering the cavalry to move round the enemy's flank and attack him. Never was order better carried out, but the credit of its conception is due to General Graham alone.

It is one of the most universal facts of war that to a young officer at his first action the slaughter which he sees taking place around him, though in reality trifling compared to that which is being inflicted upon the enemy—small compared with that of most successful fights, and only representing a very small percentage of those present—appears to be appalling and overwhelming. I have heard young officers, after an action in which only a few of their men were wounded, and about which people at a distance were rather disposed to scoff as not a serious affair at all, confess that at the time they thought that their whole regiment was being destroyed—that no one was going to escape alive. It was not, therefore, surprising, and was only natural, that the young messenger whom General Graham sent back should not realize as clearly as his experienced and war-tried chief how perfectly the force at Kassassin was master of the situation. It was still more natural that when cross-examined by older soldiers, themselves possessed with the idea that General Graham was in great straits, he should answer that his general much needed the cavalry, for the general was barely able to hold his own, and that in the excitement of the time he should not make it as clear as he afterwards supposed that he had done at what point his general's message ended and his own comment began. It was, in such circumstances, inevitable that General Drury Lowe should, in reporting the advance of his cavalry, report it as an advance made to save General Graham's force. Every word of General Drury Lowe's despatch was the straightforward report of a



soldier speaking from the facts as they were before him. What is quite certain is that no message saying in any way that he was in difficulties was ever sent by General Graham. What—to anyone who immediately afterwards and on the spot spoke to and talked with officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, of General Graham's force as to the incidents of the day—is quite as certain is that never was a body of troops more confident in their leader and in one another, or more sure of victory, than the force at Kassassin throughout the period of General Graham's command.

That there were in the force young officers who were infected by the tendency I have referred to, to imagine that everything was going wrong, I should take for granted ; that, not knowing that the cavalry had been ordered by General Graham to advance, or that that advance was part of his programme for the battle, they should also look upon General Drury Lowe as an accidental saviour from ruin is very natural. What is simply to be deplored is that, when two gallant soldiers have each admirably done his duty, and are each stating facts perfectly reconcilable with one another, an effort should be made by writers at home to invent contradictions when there are none, and to throw two excellent officers like Kilkenny cats over the rope to tear each other to pieces.

The order for the cavalry to advance was from every point of view wise and sound in a military sense, but it was an order for the employment of cavalry to perform their proper function in completing and following up a victory, in engaging from a favourable direction and by surprise troops already fully occupied with a force in their front, and was in no sense a cry of distress.

For the croakings of a few weeks ago, for the misconceptions, misstatements, and misunderstandings, of that time, undisciplined haste for news was directly responsible.

Every army necessarily moves forward, like a serpent,

upon its stomach, and during the time that arrangements for getting the canal and railway transport into working order were being perfected, and the supplies pushed up along them, there was nothing dramatic or exciting for newspaper correspondents to telegraph. For them these were days of idleness; for the greater part of the army, and especially for the staff, they were the hardest working days of the campaign. But as the correspondents had nothing to do, they covered their difficulty partly by declaring that everybody was idling like themselves, and partly by grumbling and croaking. They did not understand what was going on, and so they said that nothing was going on.

Whilst the memory of all this folly is still present in the mind of England, and in a case where its exposure was dramatic and complete, it seems worth while to put forward a warning which, though it will certainly be forgotten by the greater part of the public before our next campaign, may yet be conveniently put on record. Whatever general you put in command of your next expedition, if he understands his business, there must inevitably be a long period of delay before anything startling and dramatic takes place, or between one startling stroke and another. It will almost certainly be the case that the delays will be much longer and more serious than they have been in the Egyptian campaign.

As certainly as these delays occur, newspaper correspondents on the spot will begin to croak that nothing is going on. Whilst this particular form of croaking is taking place will be almost certainly the time when the hardest work is going on, and when the successes of the future are being assured. But unless people at home are much less mere news-hunters than they are at present, the croakers will be believed and the nation will suffer.

The telegraph exposes England to a far graver risk of disaster than any other country is exposed to, precisely because of the freedom of our institutions. If the nation must have its palate tickled with morsels of exciting news,

and will not exercise any self-restraint in its craving for excitement, but will yet insist upon exercising a controlling voice, the sound of which is determined by all kinds of false impressions and false inferences, there is no doubt that it will be sated with exciting news, but it will be the news of dire disasters produced by this very recklessness.



## VI

### UNWRITTEN LAWS AND IDEALS OF THE BRITISH ARMY

'There is a heritage of heroic example and noble obligation, not reckoned in the wealth of nations, but essential to a nation's life; the contempt of which, in any people, may, not slowly, mean even its commercial fall.'—*Jackanapes*.

GEORGE ELIOT tells us that 'Our lives make to themselves a moral tradition, and to have acted nobly once seems a reason why we should act nobly always.' The words are as true of nations and of all human organizations as of single men. Agincourt, Blenheim, Salamanca, Vittoria, with other attendant memories, floating over Waterloo, 'with a mighty voice' cried 'Havoc!' and 'let slip' those young soldiers who there first saw war, and under such inspiration 'rushed to death as into a game of football.' The *Birkenhead* has 'seemed a reason' for many a noble action done since then by shipwrecked Englishmen.

But note the words! It is 'to have acted,' not 'to have spoken,' that is set forth as the motive. Yet there is truth in the thought of Tennyson that in the life of nations it is often needful to dare so to speak 'that if to-night our greatness were struck dead, there might be left some record of the things we said.'

I quote both of these because all our foreign critics have noticed that there is no army with such a tradition as ours which has produced so little military eloquence. In this the army, better than our great statesmen and orators, represents the nation. 'John Bull,' as Carlyle put it, 'is a dumb animal.' The stateliest things that have been said

about our soldiers have been spoken by those who have fought against them—by Foy, by Bugeaud, by Napoleon. As an appeal to the latent ideal, 'The General says that Dargai must be taken: the Gordon Highlanders will take it,' has never been surpassed. The words took us all by storm because they so happily touched a national instinct; for, in truth, it is not because the ideal is not there that it so rarely finds expression in speech. Rather it is because the ideal lies so deep down in those rugged breasts, and because of a certain grim humour most characteristic of dumb British valour, that those who have to lead such men hardly dare trust themselves to utter mere talk. 'What business had he to chatter on parade?' was the comment of one excellent soldier on the Dargai speech.

The most famous of all such sentences partly failed in its purpose because a false tone had been forced into it by needful haste. 'England trusts,' 'England relies on every man to do his duty'—these and similar forms were discussed by the great sailor as he pushed forward towards his triumphant death. He intended to adopt the trustful and confident note—the suggestion of victory that sounds in that of Dargai. But when the conditions of the signal code changed the order to 'England expects,' the result was that among the men the grumble went round, 'What! does the old — think we ain't a-going to do our dooty?' Yet the man has never lived who understood as perfectly as Nelson how to draw out the latent grandeur of stolid British humanity. Wellington had no sympathy with it, and never attempted to address it. Marlborough, like Wellington, appealed to it by deeds, not words. Henry V., if we are to trust Shakespeare or Bacon, moved it by personal sympathy rather than by eloquence. He, however, had to deal with English yeomen, not with the many men who, 'scalliwags' at best, served Nelson and Wellington. And yet, as Nelson, Moore and the Napiers realized, there was an ideal deep in the hearts of the many blackguards whom Crauford and Wellington flogged into order which could be reached by

other means than flogging. Wherever you find a British army at its best, close personal intercourse between officers and men, the value of which no one felt more than Wellington, has been the cause of its strength and unity. For the army is not the officers, and it is not the men—it is the united whole ; and the ' ideal and unwritten laws ' are determined by the nature of that unity.

I have always believed the story that the patron saint of England was originally a purveyor to Cœur de Lion's army. The selection seems to me typical of that grim humour of which I have spoken as one of the permanent characteristics of the race. I like to think of the men of that day saying : ' These Frenchies have their St. Denis, and all the others have their St. This and St. That ; George is the man for us : he gets us the prog.' It represents the same feeling which made the regiment, when it was asked to allot a Victoria Cross, vote for the man who brought up the beer. Apart from humour, there is a good deal more in both stories that makes for what is best than altogether lies on the surface. If I am right in my interpretation of the earlier legend, it meant in a dumb fashion that each man (especially if he were decently fed) could trust himself, his English comrades, his leaders, and, above all, his hero-King, to do all that men could do against the Saracens, and that he did not want any fancy saint for the purpose. Napier has spoken in one of his most classic passages of ' the strength and majesty with which the British soldier fights.' I rather think that his greatest quality lies in the stolidity which looks upon the work in hand as a thing that has to be done and not talked about—a stolidity that leads to heroic actions, because they imply an entire forgetfulness of self at moments when nothing will be left of him if things go wrong. These he carries through triumphantly, without dreaming for a moment of making himself a hero, having withal perfect confidence that his comrades are doing just as well as he is—that he can trust them as himself. It is that satisfaction in the work that has been done together,



and not in individual distinction—the wish for union against disintegrating jealousy—which underlies the voting for the patron saint and for the Victoria Cross. The same spirit shows itself again in a story told by one of Napoleon's dragoons, who had fought in many of the Emperor's campaigns, and on a certain occasion had, with his regiment, through some local bad handling of an English battalion in the Peninsula, broken in upon its rear and flanks. 'We thought,' he says, 'that all the fighting was over. We had always seen in every other army in such circumstances the men begin to run at once, so that we had only to chase them. Instead of that, to our utter amazement, these fellows gathered together in little knots all over the ground, swearing horribly, and they drove us off.' 'Swearing horribly,' no doubt, because they knew 'someone had blundered.' That did not in any degree alter the fact that they had to do the best they could. 'The inimy is gitting round our flank,' audibly whispered, on another occasion, some quick-witted Irishman in the ranks. 'What has that to do with you? Look to your front!' was the prompt reply of his stolid Saxon sergeant.

These are specimens of the ideal working under those conditions in which alone on this earth 'the immortal garland is to be run for'—*i.e.*, 'notwithstanding dust and heat.' As our national poet has put it, from the days of Agincourt downwards, the reward looked forward to by our army has been to be 'familiar in their mouths' at home 'as household words.' 'What will they say in England?' has been the spur to action which has laid at the feet of the Mistress of the Seas the greatest empire that the world has ever seen. And yet sometimes 'what they say in England' by a long way misses what it might be.

This, then, is the ideal which shines through all the dust that may sprinkle it in practice. 'The man is nothing; the Service is all in all. The Service is the preservation of national life, the fulfilment of national duty, the safeguarding of national honour.' Properly speaking, therefore,

it is the function of every subject and citizen of the nation by the very fact of his being a member of it. The eighteenth century in Britain committed a crime for which it almost deserved to 'blow out its brains,' in the great catastrophe with which on the Continent it ended. It largely substituted in the armies of Britain gaol-birds for the yeoman who had followed Henry V., and had under Cromwell formed the grandest fighting force that ever trod the earth. Fortunately, the gaols of those days contained some very fine fellows, who only needed to be brought under just and firm government, and given scope for their superfluous energies, to be capable of very noble devotion. Most of them had not lost the throb of national life or the pride of belonging to a free country. The worst effect of their presence was to repel the very element from which the armies of former years had drawn their strength.

Even now, despite every effort to restore something at least of the old character to our armies, we suffer from the evil tradition in the type of recruit who is willing to offer himself for service. Napoleon was not untruly said to have fallen at last chiefly because the mothers had joined the priests of all denominations in alliance against him. Till we can conciliate those potent allies by showing that we are able to offer a career fit for sons of whom they may be proud, I do not believe that the real will approach near enough to the ideal to give us the men who ought to act for Britain in the struggles of the future. For the army is, after all, of value or not in so far as it represents the nation in *war*. To war it must look forward. A doctor who combats disease, a lawyer who is engaged against crime or in behalf of justice, does not pray for an epidemic of disease or crime. If he cares for his work, he does wish to be employed when the epidemic breaks out. The noblest clergyman does not wish that there should be vice, though he volunteers to plunge into the vilest slums in order to combat it. Similarly, I am convinced that that is for soldiers a false ideal which sprang up in years of peace and led to

soldiers saying with pride: 'I go where I am ordered; I never volunteer.' A few years ago this notion of the more correct and moral course for a soldier was rampant both in and out of the army. Thank God it is almost dead now. I do not think it ever had any force among the rank and file. In our time every man of any rank who gets an opportunity of seeing service is a subject of envy, not because of possible honour and rewards, but because carpet soldiering is a poor business except in so far as it looks forward to that for which it is only a preparation. This is a change in unwritten law in which we ought to have more than we have of the sympathy of our countrymen. They are interested in us as we appear before them on parades and look pretty in a march-past; but unless the parade represents something that will be an effective means of guarding their lives and honour, they are amusing themselves like babies with a toy. They have a potent influence both on our ideals and on our unwritten laws. If they fancy that the lady-killer, swaggering Barry Lindon, the man who is too superior a person to take his profession seriously, the empty-headed noodle, is the beau-ideal of a soldier, they help to develop a being who will bring them loss of relations and national disgrace.

Apart from the purpose for which an army exists, the methods by which it is made strong, is made capable of united action, and is in fact moulded into a corporate whole, so that it becomes a great giant instead of a congress of pigmies—organization, of which discipline is the inspiring breath, the development of health, the training in the use of the limbs by physical exercises, the habit in each member of feeling not as an isolated unit, but as one of a great family, have for the man subject to their influence advantages altogether apart from war, and involve ideals and unwritten laws which have moral effects of their own not to be confused with those that are properly war-like.

The body properly developed by suitable training, skill at arms, and horsemanship, ought to be thereby better



fitted for most of the healthy functions of civil life. If the mind suffers in some respects as it gains in others, that is rather the result of the yielding of the man himself to facilities and temptations that are open to him than any part of the influence of a true ideal or of the just pressure of unwritten law. For as regards the mind the unwritten or only partly written law has considerably modified since the day when it was 'forbidden to the soldiers of Prussia to think,' and when other armies adopted that principle. Prussia has of late led the way in insisting on the necessity for developing all the faculties of a man—moral, mental, and physical—in order that he may the better play his part in modern war. Unity was the first thing needful for the armed strength of a nation, and it seemed in former days easier to secure this by leaving only one mind to act, and by making all the bodies it had to direct mere automata. Modern weapons broke down that notion. It became, for the purposes of effective action, necessary to accustom men to adapt the orders they had received to circumstances unforeseen by him who gave the orders.

It followed that military training had to be modified to suit the new conditions. The ideal of discipline came to be, not mechanical obedience to dictation, but an intelligent appreciation of circumstances and a perfect submission of the will so far as to insure unity by an honest effort to employ all the powers of mind and body in carrying out the assigned purpose. Between the ideal and the real, however, the distance necessarily becomes wider when for a mechanical instrument there is substituted fallible human judgment. At every link in the chain the principle may be acknowledged that the duty of the superior is to train the subordinate to right judgment; but since now as much as ever one man must be held responsible for the working of what is under his orders, the temptation to secure his wishes by the simpler method of dictation is always strong. The 'weight of ages,' potent in all the concerns of life, is nowhere more potent than in the long-

established traditions of an army. Theoretically the lieutenant-colonel may know that it is now his duty to train his captains ; the captain, his subalterns ; the subaltern, the sergeants ; and so on to the privates. Practically habit rules. The private has been in the habit, as Rudyard Kipling has it, of hearing ' 'shunt ! ' \* and ' 'shunting ' accordingly. The sergeant has been bred for a longer time in the same custom, and the colonel longest of all. And so it comes to pass that we often rather honour the ideal and the unwritten law by regretting their infraction than by securing in the private the habit of a mind trained to look after himself and to do with full activity of thought the work assigned him.

Yet, in Britain at least, there has been a parting of the ways between civil and military ideals, not of the kind that is usually assumed. The soldier who is thrown upon his own resources as a civilian finds himself in our time at a disadvantage, not nearly so much because he misses the accustomed mechanical direction over him which has told him exactly how to employ every hour, has done his housekeeping for him, and insured him provision for the morrow, but for quite another reason. Whilst in principle at least military life has worked in the direction of a greater, though a disciplined, freedom of mind, in civil life the extension of huge organizations and manufactories has produced a change of exactly opposite character. In the new world he enters when he leaves the army, the soldier finds everywhere men, boys, and girls, who can in an hour turn out an infinite number of pins' heads or perform some other minute detail of work with a mechanical dexterity which no one who attempted half a dozen processes could approach. It is therefore to be noted that now the difficulty is that ' it is forbidden ' in much of the population of England ' to think,' lest they loose their capacity as machines. The wheel is come full circle. This is now the great difference in training between civilian and military, and it tends to be

\* The abbreviated form in which the command ' Attention ! ' sounds from the sergeant's mouth.

more accentuated as time goes on and each approaches more nearly to the new ideal. We soldiers feel it in developing among many of those the country sends us the intelligent co-operation we require. Men habituated to become mere parts of a machine when boys, however much better they may be than their fathers were in the matter of 'the three R's,' are not well fitted to take their parts in a living organism in which, not the death, but the life, of the individual is required to be devoted to the whole. The independent yeoman, perhaps, required more training, but the life was in him. It may be a question whether in this respect the ideal of the modern army is not a more healthy one, even for civil life, than that of the factory.

To judge, however, of the effect of unwritten laws, we must see them in action. Let us test them by cases of our own time. Twice within my own memory the army found itself sharply at issue with what at the moment appeared to be the dominant public opinion of the country. In both cases the army may now safely appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober. In the first instance a terrible catastrophe had occurred. A gallant young foreigner of high position had passed through one of our military schools, and had been attached to one of our armies in the field. He had been placed for a reconnoissance under the charge of a captain in our army. That officer had been for some time, perhaps always, in a condition hardly known among English gentlemen—not, therefore, taken into the calculations of those who assigned him this duty. He had been at least for some weeks living under the influence of abject personal terror. Suddenly attacked by a savage enemy, he had jumped on his horse, and, without a thought of his comrade, had galloped to save his own life far beyond any reach of personal danger. His comrade's horse was a little troublesome to mount, just sufficiently so to make it certain that a little assistance would have saved him. Unable unaided to get into the saddle, he was, after a gallant struggle, stabbed by the assegais of many enemies. It was inevitable



that the officer who had left his comrade in the lurch should, in any army in the world, be tried by court-martial. Apart altogether from the person deserted, an army exists by the faith that one soldier places in the loyalty of another. I do not know the soldier of whom I should not feel confidence that in like case he would have risked his life to help me to secure my horse. The severest thing that I ever heard said by a gallant soldier of another officer consisted in an expressed doubt whether, if either he or I were 'in a hole' together with that man, he would not, if possible, make his escape alone. But, further, every soldier, and especially an officer, carries with him the honour of Britain. In this instance the man who had been deserted was pre-eminently at the moment the guest of Britain. To abandon in base panic that guest, in order to save his own life, was to trample under foot the honour of Queen and country—the very thing which the captain was pledged to defend.

The officer belonged to a particular religious coterie. He wrote a series of letters couched in its distinctive phraseology. A number of influences began to affect English opinion when the news came home: a certain flunkeyish dread of flunkeyism—a fear, that is, lest one should not protest enough against undue regard for the loss of a Prince—a morbid horror of the possible decision of a court-martial, some natural sympathy with a man utterly disgraced, and, as popular opinion supposed, not perhaps unjustly on the merits, in some danger of his life. The letters, no one of which expressed any noble feeling in regard to his action or regret for the disgrace he had inflicted on the English name, all of them taking up the pose of a religious martyr, fanned among certain classes these feelings. Probably a manly unwillingness to help to drown a sinking man prevented any check being put in the way of the rising sentiment by those who might have stemmed it. The cowardice with which, when once public opinion has run on to a wrong track, men shrink from before it no doubt helped on the result.

Finally the apparently dominant opinion in England had

actually erected this man into a hero and a martyr, for no other reason than that he had, to save his own life, abandoned a comrade and the guest of England to his death. In the same ship three officers returned home from the war. One had lost both his eyes in the fighting, one had distinguished himself by gallantly defending a beleaguered town, the third was the martyr who had not faced death. A large deputation came on board from the port at which the vessel arrived. Came to express no sympathy with the man who had lost his eyes in their service, no appreciation of the commander who had saved his besieged army. 'What they said in England' was that the one man they appreciated was the coward and betrayer of his trust.

The contrast in the thought of the army is sharp enough. It found expression first at the court-martial, which sentenced this martyr of public opinion to be cashiered. Public opinion was strong enough to require his return to his regiment with all the honour which such opinion could confer. The younger generation to which one may now appeal has grown up under the education of the noble tale in which a lady embodied the unwritten law of the army. Mrs. Ewing wrote 'Jackanapes' in order to send back to the hell from which it rose that wicked spirit which, assuming the devil's favourite masquerade—a religious garb—then posed as public opinion in England. I exempt Scotland and Ireland from the stigma, for I am not aware that they were *participes criminis*. The law needs not to be written, but Mrs. Ewing has put into the mouth of Jackanapes its sufficient embodiment: 'Leave you? To save my skin? No, Tony, not to save my soul!' A fair gage of battle thrown down before the throne of the Most High to those whose religious appeal is to the baser instincts—to the fears and the selfishness of men.

The other case I propose to give—where the nature of army unwritten law is best illustrated by its contrast with, I will not say the sober judgment of the country, but the kind of popular opinion which, as in the other instance,

seems for the time dominant—is more recent. A party of very dashing and high-spirited officers had been employed under a civilian leader in carrying out a very skilfully managed and successful campaign against a native tribe. While still belonging to the army, they were subsequently doing duty as a kind of ‘border police’ on the frontier of a neighbouring State. They were persuaded, without any adequate authority, to make a dash across the border and interfere in the intestine politics of a country in which many British men and other foreigners thought they had grievances, and were anxious to upset the government. The affair was badly managed, and they failed. Popular enthusiasm was aroused for them because of the bold way in which they had faced personal risk in behalf of what they believed to be the interest of an English-speaking populace. The events are so recent that I need not discuss the facts further. My point is, that the army unanimously condemned what the London mob applauded. It is here, as elsewhere, the essence of unwritten law that it cannot by its nature be written. It can be judged only by the true story of fact and judgment thereon, or by a fable which presents the case. The ‘moral’ at the end of the fable is only a feeble echo of the spirit of the unwritten law.

So far I have spoken chiefly of unwritten laws which guide the action of private men, not of those laws which affect such as are entrusted with authority and power of any kind, or their relations with men under them. Some of these laws, though not embodied in any code, admit of more easy reduction to writing than those of which I have hitherto spoken. Since discipline exists in order to insure united action, its first law is that the man who has to carry out any assigned duty, whether that of a corporal’s guard or the command of an army, is alone responsible for it to those who have assigned him the duty; he must therefore have power and authority in proportion to his responsibility. You cannot make a man responsible for doing what he has not the means to do. It follows that there is nothing in principle



arbitrary in military authority. An order is obeyed, not only because it is the duty of the subordinate to obey, but because the subordinate knows that it is the duty of the superior to order. It is involved in his function and responsibility that he should do so.

I had recently an amusing illustration how entirely this way of looking at things is a matter of trained habit, not natural to a man as such. I had been giving to a popular audience an account of the incidents connected with the sinking of the *Birkenhead*. My hearers had been thrilled by the story, as English men and women always are, no matter how clumsy be the narrator. After I had finished a Socialist spoke. He protested that it was altogether wrong for the officers to have appealed to their men to risk their lives by remaining on the ship for the sake of the safety of the women and children. The right course would have been to have left the men to judge for themselves; then if any of them risked their lives it would have been fine. That the men should naturally look to their officers to give them example and moral guidance struck him as quite unnatural. I think he was converted before he left the room; but the very fact that this could have been said at all shows how entirely the story of the *Birkenhead* records the triumph of discipline over the instincts of the natural man. The Socialist's speech was the expression of the sentiment which makes an armed mob impotent against an army.

Further, discipline is a means to an end. Discipline does not justify action which defeats the ends of discipline. Of this there are many classical instances. 'I vil not kill my young mensch,' said Wellington's German cavalry Colonel when, having been sent in pursuit of the enemy, he encountered on his way an unexpected precipice, and thereupon drew up despite his orders. Nelson's appeal to his blind eye at Copenhagen may have been, as Captain Mahan thinks, rather made to the gallery, but the principle was sound. He was in a position to know that to draw off

would mean the destruction of his fleet, and that his one prospect of success was to continue the action. The principle is equally applicable to land and sea service. Suppose that in given circumstances I know that, if I exercise my judgment in a matter entrusted to me, and am wrong, I may be professionally ruined or shot, but have positive evidence under my eyes that if I do not vary my instructions the lives of thousands of men under me may be lost and the success of the action will be compromised, nothing can morally excuse me, every unwritten law condemns me, if I set up the plea of discipline—the means against the end.\*

This brings me to another point in the responsibility of a commander—one in which popular opinion does all the mischief that the gallery is apt to do when it sets itself against 'the censure' 'of which one must overweigh a whole theatre of others.' There is nothing that John Bull likes so much as to hear that, without ruse or skilful conduct of any kind, a small number of Britishers have attacked a strong position manned by superior numbers and taken it. Now, certainly there are circumstances in which a commander is justified in making such an attempt; but adopted as a rule of action it is about as criminal a proceeding on the part of a commander as the wholesale poisoning of a similar number of men entrusted to his care. A general is sent out for certain national reasons to overcome an enemy's resistance. For that purpose he has an army under his orders. He is, of course, bound to do his utmost to gain the end for which he is employed, and not to spare his army in so far as it is necessary to sacrifice it to secure the result. But he is also bound to save his army as far as his skill and every legitimate means that he can employ enables him to do so. The late Sir Patrick McDougal, belonging as he did to the generation of soldiers which succeeded the last of Wellington's veterans, was one of the first of his day to make some attempt to study war as a science. He unfortunately

\* Three years after this was written this unwritten law became a written law for the army.—ED.

committed himself to the unhistorical statement that Wellington's method of carrying on war was of the bloody type loved by the gallery. He put this into the phrase that Wellington had always acted on the principle that 'Honesty is the best policy.' Now, of course, if he had meant that Wellington was a high-minded, honourable English gentleman, it would have been most true. But as used it had quite a different effect. It assumed that the captures of Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, and San Sebastian, magnificent feats of war certainly, were typical instances of Wellington's ordinary methods. Those captures, made as they were at frightful cost, were yet economical of life, because with an army inadequately equipped Wellington could not have afforded the time for slow siege or for the arrival of proper siege-trains. When he was not under such necessity, no general less based his actions on the principle of bulldog, go-ahead recklessness. His system of spies and of information generally was perhaps more perfect than has been possible in any other war. No one knew what he was intending till he made his stroke. The army that found itself secure within the lines of Torres Vedras looked with amazement upon works which had required a year for their completion, of the very existence of which they had never heard. By his orders to the civil population he starved the French out of Portugal. He waited for dreary weeks, watching Masséna reducing the frontier fortresses. Again, he waited for dreary weeks for the opportunity which came at Salamanca. In both instances he fought his enemy only when he had him at a disadvantage. He surprised Soult on the Douro. Before Vittoria all the army, even those in his immediate entourage, were wondering for weeks what was going to happen, whilst he was stealthily slipping, unknown to any but those immediately concerned, along mountain roads a division which, when at length the main body advanced, outflanked on the north the French, who found out nothing of this movement.

So *rusé* was his conduct of the war that Gneisenau, who



was the Prussian attaché at his headquarters, came away with a profound distrust of him, as of a man whose character had been formed by dealing with unscrupulous Easterns in India. I have always suspected that this was due to the fact that he had on some occasion outwitted Gneisenau, and, having hoodwinked him as to his intentions, had made him the unsuspecting vehicle of spreading false reports, acting upon the principle familiar to war—that what is believed in your own camp will soon be believed in that of the enemy. It is even possible that at some time or other, when Wellington had very good reason to know that Gneisenau's despatches were likely to be intercepted by the French, he had by indirect suggestions led Gneisenau to report home, on apparently good evidence, that Wellington was intending to do exactly what he did not contemplate. In any case, it is clear that Gneisenau's *amour-propre* had been in some way hurt by his not being able to fathom the mind of the man with whom he was dealing. All I wish to suggest by these illustrations is that the general who does not keep his own counsel, and leave an enemy under a false impression of what he intends to do and when he intends to do it, is not merely unskilful, but offends against an unwritten moral law of very great authority—namely, the one which requires him to save the lives of his own men by every means in his power. A modern general is surrounded by a number of people who follow a different unwritten law. The primary principle of every newspaper correspondent as such is that it is his business to obtain the most striking news that he can to send home to his paper. His loyalty to his newspaper is his first law, and in conforming to it he is bound if he can to outwit his competitors in obtaining correct and early information. He has, therefore, naturally Gneisenau's feeling towards any general who, for the sake of his army and his country, outwits him as Wellington outwitted Gneisenau. It is a conflict between two antagonistic unwritten laws.

What I have attempted here has been in no wise to write

unwritten laws. To try to do that would, in my judgment, be to destroy their very nature. They are valuable—at all events, as concerns an army—in proportion as, being in themselves wholesome, they have been absorbed into its life-blood rather than uttered by many mouths. They can, therefore, be understood only as they are illustrated by the way in which they determine judgment and action. As Wellington put it, they represent the effect of a system of discipline, established and well understood. To bring this into direct conformity with the general laws of the universe, it may be translated thus: Only through the real can the ideal be seen, and then only through a glass darkly. Only through the Son is the Father revealed.

## VII

### *THEORY AND PRACTICE\**

WE English so boast ourselves of being a practical nation that we have come to use the words 'theory' and 'practice' almost like 'vice' and 'virtue.' We use them somewhat in the sense in which a clergyman talks about 'orthodoxy' and 'heterodoxy'; in which a politician talks about what is 'constitutional' and what is 'unconstitutional.' Just as 'orthodoxy' is what I think, and 'heterodoxy' is what you think, when you are opposed to me; as what is 'constitutional' is the thing that my party does, and what is 'unconstitutional' is the thing which your party does; so we are inclined to use the phrase 'theory and practice' in this sense, that whenever we want to say that what we think is right, and that what those who do not agree with us say is wrong, we put it: 'Oh yes! what you say is quite theoretical, but what I want to convey to you is practical.' Now, I think that if we examine the question we shall find it possible to assign other uses to the words 'theory' and 'practice' than merely to employ them when we want to complain of others being 'theoretical,' and to assume on every occasion that what we say is 'practical.'

Anything, or almost anything, that we do during peace time as a preparation for war is in part theoretical, in part practical. All our forms of attack, our mode of drill, all that we do in the field, are either sound or not in proportion as we have deduced them from the practice and experience of fighting in the field, by certain conclusions which must

\* This in its original form was delivered as a lecture to the Military Society of Ireland in 1891.



be to some extent theoretical—that is to say, based upon reasoning on the practice of the past. In thinking over our various activities on our training-grounds in peace time, I find it hard to pitch upon anything which has not in it a theoretical element. I thought at first that, at all events, our training in shooting was wholly practical; but as firing at a target is not the same thing as firing when other men are shooting at you, this training depends for its value on theory founded on the experience of war. Next I thought: 'At all events, the condition in which we keep our horses cannot possibly be anything not thoroughly practical; that must be a practical preparation for efficiency in war.' But, then, if we keep our horses 'pig-fat' for the purpose of inspection, I am not quite sure that that is not a very 'theoretical' preparation for war. The question, in fact, comes to be whether or not we have our horses in the condition which is most actually efficient for fighting in the field.

Following this reasoning out into all similar cases, it is apparent that in all work done out of this room, whether in drill or in any form of work in the field, there enters a theoretical element, which may be founded on false theory; and if the theory be false,—that is, if it is not deduced correctly from the experience of war in the past—then the work is most unpractical. I think that examination of the facts brings us to this conclusion: that what we want to get at, if we can, is the largest possible practical experience of what fighting actually is, and from that deduce what we should do in peace time as a preparation for war. The practical value of all our peace work, whether it be in this room, or in the study of books, or in anything else, or whether it be what we do on field-days, or in stables, or on drill-grounds, must all be judged by that standard alone. I include 'the study of books' because only in books can we find records of the experience of fighting as it has actually taken place in the field. As we English officers have not been engaged against an European army, we must by some means or other get to know the conditions

of European war. Now, of this I am quite sure : that the moment you get those conditions recorded within the covers of a printed book there will be a resistance to its reception as anything practical, in England, which is quite peculiar, not to the army, but to us as English people.

To show that I do not exaggerate in that respect, I will quote recent experiences of my own as to the tendencies of Englishmen to look at the outside cover of a book as a bugbear, a thing that they are afraid of. Why is it that Scotch gardeners are such uncommonly valuable people as they are—that they have acquired such a high reputation ? I have done a good deal of gardening within the last few years, and I find that, if you employ English gardeners, the difficulty is that they have been trained in their own little village, where they remain, wedded to certain local practices, which may be good in their way, but they are not the methods adopted by the best gardeners. The best methods are certainly practised by those highly educated and experienced gardeners who command the highest pay. These men know from their large experience and many expensive trials how best to cultivate any particular vegetable or flower under any given conditions. Now, these gardeners, if they are to record their experience in a form in which it can reach us, and be available for our use, must put into print what they have to tell us. And, in fact, they do so both in books and in a number of gardening papers. Yet, if you try to induce an average English gardener to adopt any of the experience thus supplied to him, as a rule he simply looks on the book which contains it as something altogether outside what he has to do. He looks upon it as theory, and not practice ; whereas what I have found in regard to the Scotch gardener is that he is ever ready to find within the covers of a book the practice and experiences of other men. The great secret of the success of a Scotch gardener, who is the most practical gardener you can get hold of, is that, instead of trusting to the experience of his own people, to the training he has had in his

little village, he is ready to take the latest experiences of the best gardeners, and to test them practically. In this most practical matter of gardening it is half the battle to get a man who not only has a practical mechanical experience, but will condescend to learn from a book the experiences of other men.

As I am anxious to enforce my point that this horror and dread of a printed book is peculiarly, not Scottish or Irish, but English, I shall take my next illustration from this side of the water.\* I had an Irish girl in my employ, and I wanted some poultry reared. She had never reared any poultry before, but she had a good deal of common-sense, and she had thoroughly recognized the fact—which it is very difficult to get a great number of our officers to recognize in regard to experience of war—that there was nothing in the mere fact of a book being printed which would prevent her from finding within it very practical lessons which she might apply practically. It so happened that during the last very severe winter none of my friends had any eggs from their hens, while I used to get a dozen or fourteen a day. The simple reason was that this girl, who had never known anything about poultry before, had actually and practically applied the lessons she learned from one of the best poultry books published, and from one of the weekly periodicals in which the most experienced poultry-keepers in the country give their advice on the subject. Of course, she had not merely read the instructions, and got them by heart; but she had, for instance, when necessary, in order to follow out the instructions, gone out in bitter frosty weather to give warm food and warm covering to her chickens. From this practical experience, which reached her through the book, she produced to me the proof of the pudding—the eggs of the fowls. The success was due entirely to the practical sense which an Irish girl applied to a book from which she learned the practical experience of rearing poultry.

\* This was said in Dublin.



So perhaps I may suggest that what we want is to get, in regard to war, the best experience of those who can teach us most of it. These experiences have no other means of reaching the world at large but through the pages of print. If these experiences, when they have been ascertained, are applied by English officers with the common-sense and practical energy of which they are full, we may, by using them much as that Irish girl applied the experiences of others to her poultry, practically get good out of them of a kind we can hardly get from anything else. Therefore, with regard to the question of the distinction which exists between theory and practice, I should define it thus—that theory, if it be sound, is simply the deductions from the practice of the past, and leads on to practical application in the future.

Now, it is obvious that, if we are to make useful deductions from it, one of the first conditions is that the study of past war, of past campaigning, shall be true and correct. I quite admit that there are always many difficulties in application even when we have ascertained the truth, in regard to the past. But I find constantly that the very loosest possible study is applied to our past wars; that false theories are deduced, not from facts, but from some careless reading of them, and that 'theory' is then discredited. It cannot be right that any kind of study should be blamed because it is badly conducted by the person who has to make the application. There are two ways in which this may be done: First, that to which I have alluded—that of not ascertaining carefully what the actual experiences of the past have been. C, this I am going to give several illustrations. The second is so obvious—viz., that it is useless merely to gather the experience unless we are ready to apply it at all risk and inconvenience to ourselves—that it will be sufficient to take the case of the Irish maid. If she had not taken the trouble to go out of a frosty morning and taken her rugs and covers and put them over her hens, and had not taken the trouble to provide at the right time hot

meat for the fowls, having read the book would have been of no use to her at all. That, I think, needs little to be pressed home on Englishmen. But I now turn to the danger of misreading history.

During the Ashantee campaign we advanced on Coomassie with every man, with every weapon, that could possibly be placed on the central main road of attack on Coomassie. But the number of men who could be placed upon that road for forcing our way through was limited. A dense forest lay on both sides of the track ; the supplies of food and ammunition which could be taken with us were exceedingly limited, because every particle of both food and ammunition had to be carried on the backs of men, who had to march in a long single file behind us. Therefore to accumulate upon that line just sufficient force to drive our way through it was as much as we could do.

But there is one valuable commodity which we always have in England, and that is a considerable surplus of zealous and intelligent officers who can be employed in raising local levies out of tribes on the spot. A number of selected officers were employed right and left of us in raising native levies, who could by no possibility whatever have added to the strength of the central column, and who did by moving up various native lines of advance to right and left of our central column tend to subtract from the enemy's force directed against us. Some of these levies under Sir William Butler did more fighting than others ; they, I think, fought for a day, and ran away the next. The others, as far as I can remember, did nothing but make demonstrations along the different lines of advance. These, however, tended to draw the Ashantees away from the main road. In no case was one particle of possible force subtracted from the central column.

If there is one thing more than another which all war experience teaches, it is that the most important duty of a commander is to concentrate his forces at a decisive point and at a decisive time, and to spare nothing from that

force which can be gathered for the purpose. Now, unfortunately, it is possible to read a story like that of the Ashantee campaign in this way : ' Lord Wolseley was most successful in his advance on Coomassie because Lord Wolseley moved through the Ashantee kingdom in four different columns.' It is true that there were four different columns of the kind I have explained. A merely careless reader, not examining the facts, might conclude that our central column had been weakened. It needs some careful study of the facts to realize that that was not the case. If you like to run away with that deduction from the campaign, is it that the study of the past leads you astray? And if in the next campaign you are going into you think fit to divide your force into four or five different columns, and find, to your inconvenience, in native countries as much as in European, that you have suffered from that false strategy, who is to blame? I have endeavoured to explain that nothing like that occurred during the Ashantee campaign, and that success was not secured on that principle at all. Now, if I am right, it becomes a very useful and important illustration of the way in which campaigns and stories of the past may be so read as to be of the most dangerous application in the future. I think the deduction is, not that such study is useless, but that what you ought to do is to apply the most careful study you possibly can to the facts in order to arrive at the truth; that you must laboriously and carefully thrash out the truth as to what has happened in the past, and apply it properly to the future. The reading of any printed book is not necessarily false or mischievous because false theory has been derived from the Ashantee campaign, just as it has been constantly derived from the campaigns of Napoleon and other people.

As I have touched upon the question of false theory in regard to our own wars, I will take some other illustrations from the past which may indicate other dangers in the reading of history. There has recently been produced a book by a lawyer, Judge O'Connor Morris. I do not in the least



want to say one word which is disrespectful towards a man who has done for us a thing which I am quite sure we soldiers should most emphatically encourage. We cannot too much induce civilians to interest themselves in our work and to study it. But I think there is a considerable danger lest men working in the closet may deduce from the past very plausible lessons, which may be as misleading as that which has been made by a good many soldiers from the Ashantee campaign. I find it convenient to take one or two illustrations of false reading of history from this book,\* not because I wish to attack it, but because each of the several illustrations has a separate point of its own. They indicate how false theory may be built up in a way that leads to the disparagement of all such study.

First, then, a certain criticism of this author's struck me very much. It is applied by him to what, to my mind, is one of the grandest strokes of military genius. At the beginning of the Blenheim campaign the Duke of Marlborough made up his mind that there was only one mode by which an attack, which he knew to have been designed by France for the destruction of the empire of Austria, could be warded off. He arranged to leave the Netherlands, in which he then was, to move secretly and with great rapidity along the whole line of the Rhine in order to join his forces with those of Prince Eugene. Having joined him, he inflicted a great defeat upon the French at the Battle of Blenheim, with the result that the empire of Austria was by that movement saved, and that a blow was inflicted upon France from which she reeled, and from which she hardly recovered during the subsequent campaigns. Now, our critic, in noticing that campaign, tells us that it was not based on sound strategic principle, or that at least it was a kind of strategy that ought not to be taken as a model for future guidance, because in the course of that move Marlborough exposed himself to certain dangers from the French forces which were stationed at different points

\* 'Great Commanders of Modern Times,' by W. O'Connor Morris.

along the Rhine. These, if they had been in the hands of very able commanders ; if the forces which Marlborough had arrayed against them had not kept those commanders, whose character Marlborough very well knew, effectively employed ; and if it had not been for the difficult country which lay between Marlborough's march and the Rhine, and concealed his movements—if all this had not taken place, then those commanders might have inflicted a most serious loss upon Marlborough's army in the course of his flank march.

Now, it seems to me that that is not to read history usefully. A very large part of the work of any officer in almost any position, high or low, in war is to make himself familiar with the character of the men who are opposed to him, and to act on that knowledge. It is necessary for him to be in the habit of taking all the circumstances before him into account, and not merely to avoid a flank march or to make a flank attack because he knows the general danger or the general advantage of the movement. What is most valuable in the study of this particular march of Marlborough's is to see how that great commander, knowing the risks he ran in his movement, provided against them ; how he faced them in order to secure the splendid result which he actually secured. He could not have gained it without running the risks he did run. It is very rarely that great success in war can be obtained without possible danger. The art lies in providing against that danger adequately, and in facing it. While on the one hand it is very necessary that we should induce the practical soldiers of the army—the men whose zeal for their profession only needs direction in order to be of the greatest possible service, who are now eagerly looking for any help that they can get to an extent that was by no means so common formerly—to turn their attention to the experience of the past, it is quite as necessary to see that the sort of criticism which reduces the whole science of war to a series of mathematical lines is not presented to them as the true study of war. Now, to examine the circumstances under which Marlborough made his great

stroke seems to me most instructive. We then see how, when he had carefully considered the characters of the commanders to whom he had exposed himself, and, knowing very well the risk that he ran, had made all due provisions for that risk, he carried through with the utmost possible success that magnificent movement. But to treat a march of that kind as inferior in point of strategy because Marlborough made a flank march is a mischievous mode of study. We want to warn those who take up the line of instructors that to deal with war in that spirit is neither sound theory nor does it lead to correct practice. To my mind, the use of the study of the past which is most valuable to us is to see precisely how, among the difficulties of the past, great soldiers have faced those difficulties, have known and realized what they were, and have carried through their achievements successfully by knowing, providing for, and overcoming, the risks.

I take next an illustration of more recent strategy from the same critic. My object in choosing it is to show the necessity for careful study of the facts of past history, if any deductions are to be drawn from them which are to be useful for the future. I find that in dealing with the history of the 1870 campaign, in order to give us his views of Count von Moltke as a strategist, Judge Morris discusses the purposes which Count von Moltke had in fighting the Battle of Colombey Nouilly. Now, you will see at once that this criticism of von Moltke's purpose in fighting at Colombey Nouilly is not of much value when I tell you that Count von Moltke had hardly more responsibility for bringing on that battle than you or I had. He was, of course, generally superintending the movements of the whole army, but this battle was brought on absolutely without his prearrangement, and carried through without his presence or direction. Similarly, the same critic, making an elaborate deduction from the next battle, that of Mars La Tours, finds fault with Prince Frederick Charles for having begun the battle at all. Again, it is unfortunate for the critic



that Prince Frederick Charles had as much to do with the inception of the battle as any of us had. It was undertaken on his own responsibility by General von Alvensleben, one of his subordinates. I am by no means anxious to find fault with Judge Morris. I quote the case only to show that there is a certain tendency—I am sorry to say, not only among civilians, but not infrequently among officers—to think that you can make a loose summary of imaginary facts as they are supposed to have taken place in campaigns, and draw useful deductions from them. As I am dealing with a lawyer in this particular instance, I may say we really want to apply to the study of facts, in order to make useful deductions from them, the principles that are sound in law. We want in every instance the best evidence that the case admits of; we want, wherever we can get it, primary evidence, and not secondary evidence. In the case of the Ashantee campaign my complaint was that the critics have misread the principles of the strategy and the causes of its success. In a general sense they were correct, though not sufficiently correct, in their statements of the facts; but they have not studied the facts with judgment, or with a soldier's eye for their real meaning. In the case of these two instances from the 1870 campaign, my complaint is that the real facts have not been ascertained by the critic at all; that, instead of going to the best sources for information, he has been content to read some popular story, and to deduce conclusions from it which are purely misleading. Though I am next going to take another illustration from the same work as before, my point is an altogether different one. It concerns the true mode of applying the dicta of the great soldiers of the past to the circumstances of the present. Judge Morris, in discussing the campaign of 1866, tells us that von Moltke's strategy was entirely wrong, because it was to all intents and purposes analogous to the campaign of Frederick the Great of 1756, which Napoleon unhesitatingly condemned.

What happened in the campaign of 1756 was this:

Frederick, having made up his mind to anticipate the attack upon him by the whole of Europe—Russia, France, and Austria, especially, with Saxony as their ally—determined to strike a rapid blow against Austria. He had about 120,000 good soldiers available, and Austria had little more than 40,000. He pounced upon Saxony, shut up the Saxon army in Pirna, and then advanced into Bohemia with 64,000 men of his own army, sending 30,000 under Schwerin, one of his great commanders, to advance through Silesia, to the other side of Bohemia. He succeeded in obliging the Saxons to surrender. He was forced to leave part of his army behind as he advanced ; and, despite his great numerical superiority in the whole theatre of war, he fought the decisive Battle of Lobositz with an inferior number of troops to the Austrians. Frederick, by detaching Schwerin to Silesia, put the whole breadth of Bohemia between them, and a very small Austrian force was able to keep Schwerin away from Lobositz. Napoleon, speaking of that campaign, says that *such a method* of invading an enemy's country on a double line of operations is contrary to all principle.

What happened in the campaign of 1866 was that von Moltke found himself, in consequence of circumstances altogether apart from any scheme for the invasion of Bohemia, with his army in two great masses—one in Silesia, one partly in Saxony, partly on the northern frontier of Bohemia. He found on a certain date, when it was necessary to make his entrance into Bohemia, that, instead of the Austrian army being, as was the case when Frederick the Great began his march, actually in Bohemia, there was in Bohemia only one Austrian corps, reinforced by the Saxons, whom in this instance the Prussians had driven out of Saxony. With the exception of that one corps and the Saxons in Bohemia, the whole of the rest of the Austrian army was in Moravia—that is, completely outside the bounds of Bohemia.

At the time he made up his mind to enter Bohemia, the Austrian army had not, so far as he knew, even begun it

advance into Bohemia. He therefore gave the order for the advance of his two armies into Bohemia, expressly ordering them to move so as to concentrate at the first possible moment, and designed the whole of his campaign for the purpose of this concentration. As a matter of fact, the Austrian army had begun to move just before his order had been issued, but, according to the information on which von Moltke acted, it had not begun to move. In consequence of Benedek's being a little more advanced than von Moltke was aware of, certain opportunities were open to the Austrian commander if he had been a great leader. He might have done certain damage to the Prussians, which I need not discuss to-day. But as the result happened at Königgrätz, so far from von Moltke attacking the Austrians on the field of battle, as Frederick had done at Lobositz, von Moltke succeeded in concentrating his whole army against the Austrians in the decisive battle.

Now, I am anxious, as a question of the study of the past as applied to the future, to point out that the whole of the deductions which assume that campaign of Frederick's in 1756 to have been exactly analogous to von Moltke's campaign in 1866 are completely misleading. The one was as different from the other as two things can possibly be. In the first place, Frederick the Great entered Bohemia with his armies 120 miles apart, and never attempted to unite them. Von Moltke entered with his armies within a very few days' march of one another, about fifty miles apart. In the case of Frederick the Great's campaign, one of the armies being a force of 30,000 men, and the other of 64,000 men, there would have been no difficulty whatever, as Napoleon pointed out, in the army of 64,000 men being reinforced by the 30,000, because 30,000 men can perfectly easily get through a pass without taking more than a day to form up to the front. Von Moltke had to deal with armies of 260,000 men, and if you crowd that number through a few narrow passes it means that the rear of each column will be very long in coming to the front. They can



then as little take part in one great battle as if you separated them by much more than the fifty miles which was the distance between those armies. Therefore the whole conditions are changed when the size of the armies is changed. Again, Napoleon has, in his letters to his brother Joseph in Spain, declared that the difficulty of these combined operations is that communication cannot be established between the separate armies; but communication was absolutely established between the two armies which von Moltke was commanding by the electric telegraph from Berlin. Step by step throughout the campaign you can see that such and such a move was made by one army because of the known position and movement of the other. I am anxious to draw your attention to the effect of this difference in relation to the telegraph upon the question of the strategy, because the answer has been made that Benedek was able to use the telegraph on his own side.

The reply to that is that the telegraph provides for an army in the position of Benedek's no advantage corresponding to that which it provides for an army in the situation of von Moltke's, with the headquarters in Berlin in direct communication with the two parts in Northern Bohemia and Silesia. For the point which Napoleon makes is that in his day, when there was a central army interposed between two other armies, the central army could establish communication between its two parts, while the armies which were outside of them had no means of communication with one another. When free communication is common to both, that particular danger of which Napoleon speaks is eliminated from the army that moves as the Prussians did. You will have seen from what I have said that von Moltke's whole method consisted in concentration, while Frederick never in 1756 contemplated concentration at all, so that criticism applied to the one cannot possibly affect the other. I want to deduce from that illustration the fact that in the study of the past it is all-important for us in the first place accurately to know what has hap-

pened in the past, to take no loosely quoted dictum of Napoleon, no loosely quoted maxims merely repeated by themselves, without reading them in very close application to the circumstances which he was discussing, and to which he referred. In our application of all the study of the past to the future we must consider the practical deduction, and not be tied by forms and maxims or words. 'Theory' and 'practice' are both useful words if put in their proper place. 'Theory' is the link between the practice of the past and the practice of the future. But 'practice' and 'theory' are words which are most mischievously used if they are merely the means by which we throw stones at one another in the course of discussion, and they may be most mischievously used if it is assumed that what you do inside these walls is all theory, that what is done on the manoeuvre-ground is all practice. I have endeavoured to illustrate by a series of examples certain dangers in the reading of history. Obviously, we may as easily misapply at our field training the teachings of the past. The one test of both is the extent to which we are practically training our army to apply the lessons of the past for the effective fighting of the future.

## VIII

### NATIONAL HEALTH

#### A Soldier's Study

IN January, 1902, an article of mine was published in the *Contemporary Review* under the title of 'Where to get Men.' It set forth certain facts which had come under my observation. I need not at this moment recapitulate them, because the substance of them, much expanded, will appear in the following paper. I had not intended to touch the question again, having once drawn attention to it, but the article excited so much interest that I was asked by the Civic Society of Glasgow to give them a lecture on the subject. That led me to make a much more exhaustive inquiry than I had done in the first instance. I have gone into the bearing upon it of the investigations of many who have been lately devoting themselves to the study of these social questions, and, as the result has been to convince me of the necessity of that larger national research for which Mr. Charles Booth has asked, I propose now briefly to restate my own experiences, and to show the bearing on them of the much more painstaking and careful work of better qualified men.

During nearly the last seven years it has been one of my duties, about once a month, to visit the Herbert Hospital for the purpose of sanctioning the discharge from the army of men who had been brought forward by a 'Medical Board' as no longer fit for His Majesty's Service. I very soon found that an alarming proportion of these men had involved the State in considerable expense, but had given no return. As soon as they were put to any average amount



of work they broke down in health, had to be sent to hospital, and if, after being patched up, they were sent back to duty, they broke down again, and on the whole their record showed that they never had at any time become effective soldiers. My first impression was that this showed undue carelessness on the part of the doctors who had to examine them prior to their entry into the service. I had many conversations with the Inspector-General of Recruiting on the subject. We always endeavoured to track out any such mistakes, and to bring home the responsibility for them to the right quarters ; but the point to which my attention was immediately directed was that the number of men who become effective soldiers bears a very nearly fixed proportion to the number of those who offer themselves for enlistment no matter whether the tests be applied more or less severely at any given stage.

In former times more men were brought up for inspection in the first instance, in proportion to those who offer themselves to the recruiting sergeants, than is now the case, because directions have been given to the recruiting officers not to submit for the inspection of the medical officers men who would not be likely to be passed. The rejections by these medical officers are therefore less numerous ; in fact, the sifting process applied to those who offer themselves is threefold. First there is the rejection by the sergeants and recruiting officers of the men not likely to be passed ; then there is the rejection by the medical officers after actual physical inspection ; and lastly there is the test of trial in the service itself, represented by the experience I have recorded in the Herbert Hospital. The several percentages of rejection at these three stages vary considerably. If the sergeants bring up men too freely, the doctors reject more ; and if the doctors are too easy, the service test shows a higher proportion of failures during the first two years in the ranks. But however each of these percentages may be modified, the total of them all together remains pretty nearly constant, and, according to the best estimate I have

been able to arrive at, it has been for many years true that, out of every five men who wish to enlist and primarily offer themselves for enlistment, you will find that by the end of two years' service there are only two men remaining in the army as effective soldiers.

Now, in the first instance I want to draw attention to the importance of this fact in its bearing on the question of national defence. It is ridiculous to talk about the necessity for compulsory service, universal service, conscription, or what not of that kind, if there are more men willing to enlist than we should require if they only were fit material for soldiers. No one that I am aware of has ever proposed, under any system of compulsory service, that we should increase our existing army in a higher proportion than that of five to two; yet we have here, under our voluntary system, five men offering themselves for enlistment for every two of whom we make soldiers. Surely, then, it is worth while to inquire whether there are not removable causes which tend to produce this appalling disproportion between the willing and the physically competent. But there is another consideration which, to my mind, is even more serious. Whatever steps are taken by increasing the inducements to enlistment or by any form of pressure, compulsory or otherwise, to raise the numbers of the army, seem to me to be only like more careful methods of extracting cream from milk; the more carefully you skim the milk, the poorer is the residue of skimmed milk.

I know that there are a number of advocates of universal service who believe conscientiously that, if the manhood of the nation is subjected compulsorily to some form of military training, this will of itself cure the evils of which I speak. They point to the sturdy soldiers of Germany or of France, and believe that our unfit will be brought by the drill-sergeant to a similar condition of physical development. Now, I am not here concerned with the large question of the advantages of universal service, but this view represents a fallacy which it is important, in the interests of national

health, to expose. I know of no form of military service proposed for us in which the physical conditions of enlistment are to be lower than they are at the present time. The one effect of universal manhood service upon the health of the nation will be that a class, as to which we have no evidence that it is physically incompetent, will receive military training, and doubtless their bodies will benefit thereby; but the class which now produces the five to two will be untouched; indeed, as I have said, the probability is that the residue will be increased by the raising of the physical standard to an extent which will make the numbers who are to serve square with our requirements.

I think it is safe to say that no nation was ever yet for any long time great and free which was not able to put into the field an army representative of its own virility and manhood. I need not give many examples; they are written large upon the pages of history. People of late seem disposed to go back to the long-past story of the Roman Empire, which, though it may present some very useful analogies, was yet, thank God! in all its circumstances so unlike our own that I cannot think it is in that respect nearly so valuable as a much more recent example.

When France in wrath her giant limbs upreared,  
And with that oath which smote air, earth, and sea,  
Stamped her strong foot and said she would be free

\* \* \* \* \*

When, insupportably advancing,  
Her arm made mockery of the warrior's tramp.

What was the essential fact which Coleridge thus graphically records, but that during the earlier stages of the Revolutionary wars the whole virility of a great nation, needing only to be ordered and regulated, as ere long it was, was flung against the thin crust of recruited soldiers with no national enthusiasm behind them? What was it that made Waterloo, not a mere defeat for Napoleon, but a 'world's earthquake'? What change had taken place, but that that magnificent army of France was then a crust with nothing behind it,



that the virility of great nations was flung into the victorious assault which reduced it to powder ?

To me, then, it seems a vital matter for us to inquire what is the meaning of that disastrous proportion between the five and the two ? Does it mean that the class which necessarily supplies the bulk of the ranks of our army consists in this huge proportion of men physically unfit ? If so, what are the causes of this fatal condition of things, and are they remediable ? During the years that I was at Woolwich this question was forced upon me month after month ; naturally, therefore, it occupied many of my thoughts, and I have been seeking everywhere for such light as I could get upon it. In such a search one makes many mistakes, and has often to change one's impressions.

It will be convenient first to record the immediate causes which seem to produce the greater number of cases of physical breakdown. Unquestionably, heart weakness, pneumatic troubles, and rheumatism, with its sequelæ, supply a large number. A smaller proportion than I should have expected are immediately and obviously traceable to the consequences of one fatal class of maladies, my reference to which will be all the more clearly understood because I do not enlarge upon them. Of course, indirectly the after-effects may be telling on generation after generation without their being clearly to be detected. That question apart, most of the heart troubles, rheumatic and pneumatic weaknesses, seem to be generally connected with what in itself causes a very large proportion of the cases which make discharges necessary, the generally low anæmic condition of the whole body. Then, two special causes have come under my observation which lose us a great many men—one, flat feet, tending to make marching impossible ; the other has been specially conspicuous among the men sent back from South Africa. Numbers of them have been unable to digest their food, and have broken down in health because of bad teeth. Bad teeth are also a very frequent

cause of rejection, and are certainly a potent factor in the reduction from five to two.

Next I come to the prior causes of these immediate causes. Before I touch them, as they are complicated and much open to dispute, I must observe that my contention is, not that the prior causes which I assign, after such inquiry as I have been able to make, are the true and only sources of the weaknesses I have described, but that the subject is one of such great importance as to call for investigation, and for investigation much more thorough than can be given to it by any individual or by anything less than a searching public inquiry. But I have had both within and without the Herbert Hospital, which receives patients from all regiments in His Majesty's service, and from every quarter of the globe, some opportunities for arriving at suggestive answers to the question of the causes of these causes, and these, for what they are worth, I propose to record here.

First as to the teeth. The doctors, as far as I am aware, agree that the great cause of bad teeth is that during the period of infancy and during the early years of life, when the teeth were forming, the child did not receive the food which Nature required in order to carry out her part in the formation of teeth. Primarily, of course, that means that the supply of milk was inadequate. Everyone who has lived for any length of time in country districts is aware that under our present social organization milk is even harder for the poor to obtain in the country than it is in the towns. Everyone knows those milk-tins which crowd our railway-stations, and represent the transfer from the country to London and the various provincial towns of the milk-supply. But as regards the towns one has very noteworthy evidence of another kind. Most towns—Woolwich among the number—now adopt the excellent system of sending town children for certain periods into country districts. Moreover, during the South African War the children of the men at the front were largely looked after

by the ladies connected with the Soldiers and Sailors' Families Association ; from both these sources I have obtained valuable reports. The men's wives do not differ much in their normal domestic habits from those of their class, and are, indeed, taking one with another, I think, rather superior in point of knowledge and domestic training, and certainly much more closely associated with ladies who know them well, than the average of their class. Now, whether of the children sent from the towns into the country districts, either of soldiers or civilians, or of the children sent into hospitals, one hears the same story from those who have to look after them. The children have been so unaccustomed to the wholesome nutritious food suited to their time of life that they cannot eat it ; they want what they have been accustomed to—what they call relishes—red-herrings, pickles, fried fish, and the like.

In one instance—I believe a representative one—a puny three-year-old child in hospital, having been given a penny to amuse it, held out its hand with the penny to every visitor, begging him or her to buy for him a ' ha'p'orth of gin.' The universal testimony that I have heard is that the parents give the children, even in infancy, the food from off their own plates. One most respectable woman, in a good situation, of whom I knew, used habitually to give her six-month-old baby cold cabbage for supper, with the result that the baby cried all night, of course from pain and indigestion. I do not think that there can be any doubt that the unwholesome feeding thus given to children during their early years is responsible for a great deal of the anæmia and for the bad teeth. In many instances it is also the practice of the mothers to give their children, in mistaken kindness, ' just a taste of gin to make them lively ' ; and anyone who has watched many of the beanfeasts and other expeditions from the towns for a holiday in the country must have seen, as I have done, the liquor, which is brought out from public-house after public-house at which the *char-à-banc* stops, served round to quite young girls and



children, creating a purely artificial taste and undoubtedly injuring growth and digestion. Now, that suggests, as the great original cause, ignorance on the part of the mothers of the necessary conditions for the bringing up of healthy children. The flat feet, so far as I have been able to ascertain, point to the same defect ; for flat feet are ordinarily the result of improper care during infancy and childhood.

I come now to a point on which all those whom I have consulted personally are agreed, but on which I find the most amazing conflict of evidence among those who have devoted themselves to the larger study of these questions. It is natural to think that one very potent cause, though obviously not the only cause, of the unfitness of mothers to fulfil their duty is that of early marriages ; of the fact that, in some instances, at least, that we have all seen, children marry and beget children whom they are quite unfitted to rear. This view is further strengthened by another series of cases, in which the anæmic condition of the lads whom we have to get rid of is at least largely attributed, by the doctors, to the fact that they are the children of parents who were so young that they were not physically of age to have healthy children. But the question is, In what proportion of cases does this cause operate ? Naturally one turns for guidance to those who have been recently devoting themselves to a study of these social questions. Mr. Charles Booth, whose splendid and exhaustive work on ' The Life and Labour of the People in London ' is one's first resource, has had such an enormous field to deal with that he has left over this particular subject for treatment in the final volumes not yet published, and I have failed to get any light upon it from him. On the other hand, Mr. Rowntree, who, with a smaller field for investigation in York, has been able, in some respects to go into more detail, gives us tabular statements as to the age of marriages, which appear to show that the proportion of unduly early marriages is in York insignificant. But there are other investigators who have more specifically and directly dealt with this very question.

Mrs. Bosanquet, many of whose studies were published before her marriage, and therefore appear under her maiden name of Dandy, is very emphatic. 'These early marriages,' she says, 'are the curse of the poor.' 'Instances,' she tells us, 'like the following are to be numbered by thousands: A. B., now twenty-one, has a wife and three children to support. At sixteen he married a girl of fifteen.' On the other hand, Mr. Arthur Sherwell, who has given us a very interesting account of Soho under the title of 'Life in West London: A Study and a Contrast,' is equally emphatic on the opposite side. 'The proportion,' he tells us, 'of early marriages (*i.e.*, of persons under twenty years of age) is extremely insignificant'; and he adds: 'Considerable misunderstanding appears to exist in the popular mind as to the prevalence of early marriages, especially in the industrial districts, and the number of such marriages is often greatly exaggerated.' But he adds, also, what for my purpose is all-important: 'London compares very favourably with the rest of England.'

Now, that last phrase of Mr. Sherwell's raises the main issue to which I want to draw attention, not only in regard to this one question of early marriages, which may or may not be as Mr. Sherwell tells us, 'extremely insignificant,' or may be, as Mrs. Bosanquet tells us with much graphic detail, the result of close personal observation, 'the curse of the poor.' The point is that all these investigations, important as they are and noble as the work that has been done in them has been, are confined to areas which relatively to the whole country are limited, and the results are inconclusive. Mr. Charles Booth leads up to the conclusion, which he has emphatically stated in these words: 'What has been done for London might be much better done, and done for the whole country' (vol. ix., p. 6). Whether his particular proposal of work through the Registrar-General and the Board of Trade would be the most satisfactory, I do not feel competent to say positively. The late census will, when fully published, be an

invaluable guide, but it needs to be analyzed and expounded, so as to give us some such light on it as Mr. Booth has given us on London. *Prima facie* it throws much doubt on Mrs. Bosanquet's graphic pictures as guides to a general truth.

From my particular point of view, the questions I want answered are not met by any investigation, however complete, of the conditions of life in London or in York. What I am, from a soldier's point of view, interested in is the question as it affects the whole realm. Is what is true of York true of the great manufacturing towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire? Is it true of Glasgow, Belfast, and the other great towns of Scotland and Ireland? Is it true of the country districts of England, Scotland, and Ireland? Mr. Rowntree's evidence, if we were to accept it as true for the whole country, would apparently lead up to one appalling explanation of my figures of the five and the two. He tells us that in York the whole labouring population, as distinguished from the artisan, is just floating along the line of what he calls 'poverty'—that is, the condition in which there are not available sufficient resources to supply food for virile existence; and though, speaking generally, every family is at certain periods of its career above that line, yet the periods when each family falls below it are especially those when children are being reared. Now, if that be true for the whole country, then the impediment to the rearing of healthy children is not the ignorance of the mothers so much, or nearly so much, as that the conditions of modern life do not enable them to supply their children with sufficient sustenance. But is it true and representative? York is certainly not a manufacturing town, and to take the rather test question of the evidence about the early marriages, so far as I know what has been always alleged about the early marriages, would in several respects not apply to the conditions of York. In the first place, what has been always alleged as one of the chief causes of these marriages was the early independence of boys and girls,



and their early association under exciting conditions, both due to the circumstances of factory life. It may well, therefore, happen that what may in this respect be true of York is not true of the great manufacturing towns, or even, from rather different causes, of London. So, again, Mr. Booth tells us that London is the stronghold of small industries, and that as a result he finds that, vast as are the numbers which are absorbed in the life of great organizations, these are in London, taken as a whole, absolutely lost in the far greater numbers that stand outside the great shops and factories. Is this true of the whole country, or is it exceptional in the home of small industries? Mr. Booth thinks that what is true of London is probably true also of New York and of all the great metropolitan cities. But is it true of the country at large? Taking Yorkshire, Lancashire, and the Midlands, into account, is it still true that, vast as are the accumulations of men and women in the greater organizations which to casual observations seem to be more and more swallowing up the life of the whole country, yet the numbers that remain outside them are overwhelmingly great? This preliminary inquiry enormously affects our estimate of the causes which determine the healthfulness of modern life among the labouring classes, and of the required remedies.

I suppose that no one since the world began ever yet did anything that was worth doing without being asked, with a yawn, by not a few of his contemporaries, 'What on earth is the good of it all? 'Pon my soul I can't see!' and Mr. Booth tells us that he has had that experience. It may therefore, perhaps, be some encouragement, not only to Mr. Booth, but to those who agree with me in pressing for that more complete inquiry which he desires, if I cite an experience of the comparatively recent past. In the year 1849 there were published in the *Morning Chronicle*, a long since defunct newspaper, a series of articles by Mr. Henry Mayhew on 'London Labour and the London Poor.' To the best of my belief, I do Mr. Mayhew no injustice if I

say that, in closeness of investigation, in genuine research, in pains to be accurate, in calm judgment and anxiety to get at the whole truth whatever it may be, they did not approach the work of Mr. Booth and of those who have been associated with him. But even so the articles had this remarkable result, that, by a sequence not difficult to trace, they revolutionized the whole conditions of our industrial life; they produced, probably, comparatively little effect on the minds of the many, but they did what was much more important—they produced a most intense effect upon the minds of the few. They stimulated my father and his friends, and that very important personage in the evolution of our social life—now, I suppose, wholly forgotten—Mr. Slaney, at that time a Member of Parliament.

Mr. Slaney succeeded in getting a searching Parliamentary inquiry, and in carrying through Parliament a Bill which was immediately designed to legalize the co-operative societies of working men—a revolution in itself the effect of which in all its consequences cannot yet be estimated, but in its indirect result it created the whole system of limited liability companies. As with most things on this earth, good and evil have been strangely blended in that product. The whole business of company promotion and the rascality which has been connected with it doubtless owed their opportunity to that Act, and it has been the object of a long series of subsequent enactments to correct the evils which were so introduced. But imagine how far it would be possible to go back from that step! What living man or woman in this realm has not been affected by it? Therefore I say that, when one is asked, 'What good do you expect from any inquiry? how do you think that you can remedy the defect, if it be the case, as Mr. Rowntree's investigation would suggest, that the whole unskilled labouring population of the country is in a condition which makes it unable to rear the next generation in virile manhood?' I answer: 'It is impossible that anyone should suggest a remedy till we know the truth.' The one thing

that is certain is 'that things are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be,' whether we shut our eyes to them or not. If the blind lead the blind, we shall both fall into the ditch, no matter how loudly we shout beforehand that the ditch is not there. The ditch with falling into which we are, whether rightly or wrongly, threatened by Mr. Rowntree is a very deep one. On the other hand, I do not think that anyone who has studied Mr. Booth's book can doubt that what he presents to us is a hopeful and encouraging picture of our modern life. He looks at it, as it seems to me, with the eyes of Burke. No one but Mr. Booth since Burke's day has quite seen things as he did. Mr. Booth sees the great movement of London life as a whole ; he sees its failures, but he sees an energetic, vigorous existence, dependent on freedom and on the struggle to improve. He offers no encouragement to that wild language which we sometimes hear, which tells us that our modern system is such a disastrous mistake that it were well that it should be swept away, were it even by revolutionary violence, with its sure outcome in despotism. Nor does he even encourage those despotic measures or drastic remedies which, in their eagerness for quick reform, some among us are anxious to press on under our existing constitution. Daylight, patience, freedom, public spirits, education in its fullest sense, regard for the coming generation, are his remedies for what is defective in our body politic.

But my point of view is necessarily a somewhat different one. If this free municipal and national life is so valuable and precious, it must be guarded in all security. Does my ugly figure of the five to two imply that the class from which we have hitherto drawn the bulk of our defenders is from some cause or causes ceasing to supply the numbers of healthy men that it used to do, or at all events to such an extent suffering in its virility that it cannot now supply them ? There are certain factors in our modern life that may tend in that direction—the continuous rush of the people from the



country districts into the towns ; the disappearance of the class of yeomen ; the general depression of the agricultural districts ; the fact to which Mr. Booth so strongly testifies, that it is capacity or skill alone which in some form or other commands or ever can command an adequate wage in the towns, and therefore the enormously strong presumption that neither the unskilled labourer who has been tempted into the towns, nor the hereditary townsman who, after two or three generations, has deteriorated in physical vigour, will be able to rear a healthy family.

In some way or other, if our complicated social organism is to work out its own improvement in security, there must be provided an adequate supply of those who are to protect it. It may be that, by a process of national development which cannot now be arrested, we have so changed our character that what was formerly a great agricultural country, fitly represented by the Lord Chancellor on the woolsack, with manufacturing towns like islands in the midst of the sea of general population, is rapidly, in the main, becoming a great industrial manufacturing nation, with a small agricultural population as a mere fringe to the towns. If so, our methods of providing the needed men and of looking after the conditions which tend to their healthful development must be modified accordingly. But what I must at each stage insist upon is that it is vital for us to know the truth. If—whether because our unskilled labourers have been tempted into the towns, and have there in large measure failed to find the means of rearing a healthy family, or because of at least attackable causes, such as the early marriages and the want of knowledge of the mothers of the conditions necessary to bring up a healthy family—the result is that the rising generation of all below the artisan class is represented by the standard of health which is indicated by the figures I have given, then most assuredly we cannot afford to fold our hands and treat the question as insoluble. To do so is to commit the greatest of civil crimes—that of despairing of the State. Surely

in this case it is true that if one member suffers all the others suffer with it. We all suffer, for the very security of the State is endangered.

Whatever the primary causes of the condition of things to which I have drawn attention, we are always brought back to the fact that, whether for the virility of the nation in civil life, or for the supply of an adequate body of recruits to the army, we have to remember that the young man of sixteen to eighteen years of age is what he is because of the training through which he has passed during his infancy and childhood. 'Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined.' Therefore it is to the condition—mental, moral, and physical—of the women and children that we must look if we have regard to the future of our land. Under that aspect the observations of Mr. Barnett in Whitechapel are most significant. Mr. Barnett found that the health and long life of the children of the Jews, whose women did not go out to work, compared most favourably with that of the Christian population, the women of which worked without adequate regard to their functions as mothers. It does not follow that a stereotyped copying of the habits of the Jews would be desirable, but it may explain and justify the view of the Emperor of Germany, that, for the raising of a virile race either of soldiers or citizens, it is essential that the attention of the mothers of a land should be mainly devoted to the three K's—Kuche, Kirche, Kinder.

Perhaps I may best set forth the aspect of the question which most forces itself upon my mind by recalling the very remarkable history of the Austrian monarchy. It is, of course, by far the oldest in Europe in its hereditary connection with the old German Empire, properly called the 'Holy Roman Empire,' and through that with the Empire of the Cæsars. In war its history is almost only one of defeat. Yet what a strange vitality it has shown! Its defeats have been chiefly due to its want of national unity, to the heterogeneous character of its population, to its encrusted conservatism and old-world ways. But, according to the

observation of all who have studied its history, its amazing vitality and longevity have been due to the fact that it has within its borders a vast healthy and vigorous agricultural population, which, if not patriotic—as without national unity it cannot be—is yet eminently loyal, and supplies an almost limitless source of healthy recruits. With those and similar facts in other parts of the world before me, I cannot think that we ought willingly and with a light heart to give up the hope of saving, if it be possible, the class to which of old time our yeomen and their sons belonged, which, if I mistake not, still supplies a no small contingent to our stalwart Scottish and Irish regiments. If we could in a generation or two, either by better education of the mothers or by the creation of more favourable conditions, make nearly all of that five as virile as the two, I think that were the better way. Those two are such splendid fellows that I wish we could get more like them. I say 'splendid fellows' not merely because of their record in South Africa as given by foreign observers—that is splendid enough—but I am thinking rather of them as civil members of society.

Nothing impressed me so much in the Herbert Hospital as the type of men who had been called in from the reserve, had gone out to South Africa, and had been invalided home with perhaps a gunshot wound. These men had been from three to seven years in the army, and had then passed two or three years in civil life. All of them seemed to have found most excellent situations, and what struck me was that they had been greatly improved by the double experience. They had acquired discipline and order in the army, but army life had given them too little self-reliance. The essentially harder effort to get their own bread and that of their families without having it put into their mouths had done them a world of good. They had begun to realize what the struggle for existence meant. They had returned to the army better soldiers for the experience, and have been, according to universal testimony,



the backbone of the army in South Africa. I am certain that when they now again return to civil life they will be much better fathers of families than the majority of the class from which they sprang. This interchange between the army and civil life, which is the result of the short service and reserve system, has introduced into the population a class which will not give us many children that belong to the hopeless three among the five. At all events, it will be a class much more approachable with wise counsel than the average country bumpkin. For I am afraid I must admit that some experience that has fallen in my way leads me to realize only too painfully how very difficult is the task of teaching the mothers of the labouring class anything whatever. The ingrained conservatism of our village people has its advantages; it saves us from many dangers. But it is a terrible obstacle to progress.

The Surrey County Council at one time sent down to a village in which I was living a very well selected teacher, who offered gratuitous instruction in domestic cottage cookery to the women of the village. The object was solely to enable them to make more economical use of the food which they bought daily. The teaching was in every way appropriate and excellent. All the ladies of the place eagerly attended the lessons. I think I am right in saying that no single woman of the labouring class could be induced even to put in an appearance. The greatest difficulty in dealing with ignorance is that it has no idea that there is anything that it does not know. I am strongly convinced, both from my own experience and from all I have been able to gather from those who know more about it, that the effect of town life is very much to break up this dogged resistance to the reception of all light from outside. In that way, though the enormous numbers to be dealt with at one spot no doubt make the problem present its own difficulties, I incline to think that the rush into the towns has its advantages. It is the begin-

ning of a more active social life, and even the pressure creates a consciousness that outside light is needed.

Nothing, to my mind, is more touching than the enthusiastic reception which is given to anyone who, however feebly, tries to give an honest lead to these great aggregations of men and to speak the truth to them. There are, therefore, compensations in our social conditions, and, as I have been taking my illustrations from Woolwich, and may leave the impression that things are particularly bad there, let me say that Woolwich has been valuable to me for study, not only because the hospital supplies cases from all parts of the country, but because the social life in Woolwich is exceptionally vigorous and active, and because the most strenuous efforts are there being made to tackle these problems. I am necessarily in this paper restricting myself to the question of the necessity for investigation, and avoiding all suggestion of remedies. If that were not so, I could not do better than set forth the steps which have been taken by Mr. Davies, the Public Health Officer, under the authority of the very active and energetic Mayor and Corporation of Woolwich, to deal with these problems, and in particular the attempt to check the frightful injury to infant life from improper feeding, by issuing plain directions 'How to Feed Baby,' on a card that can be hung up for constant reference. It adds, however, a terrible significance to the whole inquiry that the motive which originally induced Mr. Davies to draw up these cards was not specifically his sense of those results to health in after-life which have come under my observation, but the appalling mortality of infants under one year of age. These causes, therefore, are diminishing the virile manhood of the country, not only by reducing the virility of those who survive, but because of the deaths, more numerous than on any battle-field, that strew with corpses the way for the poor survivals.

To return to my main subject. It seems to me that we have in this matter of national health a special right to call upon one particular body of men to give us a lead and

guidance. How necessary that guidance is may be shown by the fact that the very standard of health which Mr. Rowntree has taken for his rule in York has been publicly challenged by Mrs. Bosanquet. Frankly, I have the most profound distrust of the adequacy of these newspaper discussions as a means of arriving at truth. It is uncertain at any time whether those who are most competent to give evidence on these questions do or do not care to enter into that court for trial, and to submit to that body of judges. From them there is only one court of appeal which slowly but surely makes its decrees known by the verdict of time and of consequences.

As a rule the authority of our judges of first instance is to be considerably affected by the number of cases in which their decisions have been sustained or reversed on appeal. Now, in so far as one may judge of the view of our newspaper tribunal which is entertained in that highest court, by the number of cases in which its decisions have been sustained or reversed, I do not think that it is possible to come to any other conclusion than that there is in those high quarters a humorous pleasure in laughing to scorn the hasty decisions which are pronounced at or after midnight in a thousand newspaper offices of our land. I should be sorry to be supposed for a moment to doubt the incalculable value to us of that daylight which is let into all transactions by the working of our free press. It is unspeakably valuable precisely because it is out of the conflict of opinions that light flashes. But it is of the essence of that fact that in the course of the process each separate opinion, and often the apparently universal opinion, is ground to powder.

One may apply to the daily press without much fear of doing injustice what John Bright said of the House of Commons, that 'he had never known it to be quite unanimous in its opinion, but that it proved to be quite wrong in its judgment.' As it seems to me, there are several circumstances in the constitution of our newspaper Areopagus which must involve reversals on appeal to that high court.



In the first place, every newspaper is quite infallible, and, as far as my ears guide me, there is nothing which causes such loud laughter in the spheres as any claim to human infallibility. The fixed law of the universe, as we all know, is that the man who makes no mistakes makes nothing. In the second place, a newspaper is primarily and necessarily a commercial undertaking. It is quite right that it should be so. In the few instances where that is not the case, and where a wealthy man has sacrificed his wealth to propagating his own opinions, I cannot say that I think the result has been approved, so far as I can read the cryptic writing of those high decrees, by the decisions of the court of ultimate appeal. But, speaking generally, there is a very serious consequence which follows from the fact that this primary court is started on a commercial basis. We all of us spend between us untold thousands annually in the corruption of that court. For we each of us take those newspapers which supply us with views which we think sound. We may read or even buy newspapers of a different political or other bias to our own to see what they are saying. But it is, nevertheless, on conformity to the current of our casual impressions that a newspaper depends for its existence.

A few men—all honour to them—resist that tremendous pressure, and tell us the truth whether we like it or not; but as a rule they are gagged by their newspapers being sold over their heads, or at best they are sentenced to a heavy fine. We all know how desperately difficult it was a few years ago in France to maintain a newspaper which asked for a fair hearing for Dreyfus. We all know how, during the passionate ‘Anglophobia’ of Germany, anyone who ventured to ask for a fair hearing for us did so with a rope round his neck. We here in Britain are men of like passions with these. This is a matter on which it is vital for us to know the truth. We cannot get at it without searching investigation. When the truth has been established, unless the newspapers have previously issued an infallible decree

in contravention of it, from which they will not recede, they will be invaluable for bringing it home to their readers. From whom are we to get it ?

I have set forth here the aspect which this question presents to me as a soldier. My object is to call upon the great profession whose immediate concern is health to give us the guidance and leading we need, and primarily it seems to me that we ought to call upon the Councils of the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, as *ex officio* the great National Boards of Health, to help and guide us. I should suppose that they have not at this moment, despite the census, sufficiently comprehensive data on which to pronounce ; but if that be so, no Government could, or would wish to, resist an appeal from them for assistance in getting at the truth on the tremendous question which has been raised by the investigations of Mr. Rowntree. ' Is it or is it not true that the whole labouring population of the land are at present living under conditions which make it impossible that they should rear the next generation to be sufficiently virile to supply more than two out of five men effective for the purposes of either peace or war ? ' We want the truth. For the reasons I have alleged we shall never get it from newspaper discussions.

What the best machinery may be for getting at the truth I do not pretend to determine. Mr. Booth may be right that the best line of action will be through the Registrar-General and the Board of Trade. The analogy I have drawn from the past as to the mode in which Mr. Henry Mayhew's inquiry became so effective that it revolutionized our whole industrial life, immediately after the physical revolt against it of the Chartists had hopelessly collapsed, may suggest another alternative. But by whatever means it be done, we need an exhaustive investigation of the question, and one that will be so well brought home to the whole country that it shall no longer be allowed to sleep, with this nightmare troubling those only who love their land too well not to toss uneasily till it is

removed. So far as the remedies are concerned, it will be time enough to suggest them when we know where we stand. In the course of my investigation many remedies have been before me ; but since I have gone more thoroughly into the evidence supplied by Mr. Booth, Mr. Rowntree, Mrs. Bosanquet, Mr. Sherwell, and their fellow-workers, I have thought that the most valuable service I could render was to show cause from my side of the question for supporting Mr. Charles Booth's demand for an inquiry with larger resources at its back than his own, and applied to the whole country. I have had ringing in my ears a sentence which was written in a private letter from Charles Kingsley to Tom Hughes after they had both been for years throwing their energies into such questions as loyal subjects of this great kingdom: 'My dear Tom, there is more in the tripe of this old world than we shall drive out of them by any Morrison's pill of ours'—a sentence which no doubt has in it something of that passing depression which habitually at times attacks the most enthusiastic reformers, almost in proportion to their zeal. But it contains the essential truth that what we have to do, if we would make real way at all, is not to start some admirable theory of our own, and try to make the world fit into it, but to study with patient research what the laws are that are governing it, and how in our time the footsteps of the Most High show themselves among the facts with which we have to deal.

I may cite as an illustration of that thesis the experience of that society of men to which both Hughes and Kingsley belonged. The attempt to put into immediate practice certain theories of life which had flashed brilliantly before their eyes failed in almost every instance. The knowledge which they had acquired in the course of their efforts enabled them to contribute a momentous share to that fund of larger knowledge which was secured by national investigation, and in the long-run it fell to one of the hardest workers among them, Mr. Ludlow, to draft the Bill for Mr. Slaney which produced that industrial revolution of which I have spoken. If by



any similar investigation we could ascertain the true meaning of those figures—the 5 : 2—which I have given, it may be that we should be able to achieve a real step towards the securing of national health, and thereby to the maintaining of a virile race able to hold for us, and to hand down to our children's children, the precious heirloom which has been handed down to us by virile forefathers.



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